A CLOISTERED LIFE

Gruß von den Armen Clarissen
in West Park, O.

BARONESS MARY (20 YEARS)

#11,390

A Cloistered Life

THE VENERABLE
MOTHER MARY VERONICA,
POOR CLARE COLETTINE

---

92 2.5
V54q

With a History of the

Two Communities of Poor Clares

founded by her at

Cleveland, Ohio, and Chicago, Illinois

THEOLOGICAL
LIBRARY

The Catholic Universe Publishing Com
Cleveland, Ohio

Property of
CBF
Please return to
Graduate Theological
Union Library

BX
4705
V4
C6
1908

IMPRIMATUR
FELIX M. BOFF
Apostolic Administrator

JOSEPH F. NOLAN, D. D.
Censor

December 21, 1908

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
Introduction	7
I—Childhood and Youth	11
II—Vocation	21
III—First Impressions	27
IV—The Novice	33
V—The Spouse of the Crucified	47
VI—In Exile	65
VII—Foundation of the Monastery of Poor Clares at Cleveland, Ohio	73
VIII—Difficulties	81
IX—Cross Upon Cross	91
X—The New Monastery	107
XI—Religious Discipline and Spirit	111
XII—Visit to Harreveld	121
XIII—A Difficult Sacrifice	129
XIV—The New Mistress of Novices	133
XV—Mother Veronica Returns to Cleveland	143
XVI—Severe Trials	153
XVII—Plans for a New Foundation	159
XVIII—An Exemplary Subject	169
XIX—Foundation at Chicago	177
XX—The New Community	187
XXI—Mother M. Veronica's Love for the Blessed Sacrament	193

CHAPTER PAGE

XXII—Her Humility and Other Virtues..... 201
XXIII—Mother Veronica's Visit to Cleveland..... 215
XXIV—First Losses by Death 227
XXV—An Answered Prayer..... 237
XXVI—Illness 245
XXVII—Mother M. Veronica's Esteem of Her Vocation 257
XXVIII—Death of Mother M. Veronica..... 267
XXIX—The Last Loving Services..... 279

APPENDICES.

I—Prayers, Meditations, etc. 291
II—Consecration of the Community to the Sacred Heart of Jesus..... 343
III—Poor Soul Cards 347

INTRODUCTION.

As to the hearts of loving children it is a consolation to erect a monument to the memory of a departed mother, so to the hearts of the Poor Clares of Chicago and Cleveland has it been a labor of love to perpetuate the memory of their spiritual mother, Mary Veronica, by endeavoring to portray her life so rich in virtue.

We have in the present work made the attempt to dispel by the indisputable example of a true religious life, many of the prejudices entertained against contemplative orders in general.

Many intelligent and well meaning persons regard the members of these orders as proud, selfish, narrow minded, idle, melancholy, uncharitable.

Of the Order of St. Clare most absurd and alarming stories have been sometimes circulated.

Frequently the sisters at Cleveland have been asked if they were ever allowed to go out of doors or were ever permitted to breathe the fresh air.

Once a party of ladies from Philadelphia came to the Convent of the Poor Clares in Cleveland in order to see the "coffins" in which the sisters were supposed to have slept.

The "hunger bell" which the sisters were said to ring when there was nothing to eat, the "prison cell" in which some were locked during a whole lifetime, play an active part in these stories.

In publishing the present work we desire to dispel these

unfounded and erroneous ideas, by placing before the reader not only the personal history of the venerable mother and a sketch of the two foundations made by her, but also a true picture of the daily life of the Daughters of St. Clare.

The present work appeals to the heart rather than to the intellect. It seeks to edify and inspire the soul.

Much of its contents are drawn from the annals of the Poor Clares at West Park, Ohio, which were written by the deceased herself.

The details concerning her childhood and youth we owe to her sister and the remainder has been compiled by her spiritual daughters. The instructions and exhortations of the deceased are given, if not verbatim, at least in the spirit in which they were delivered.

We do not claim to be writing the life of a saint, it is but the story of an humble religious who sought by the practice of virtue to cement her union with Him to whom she had consecrated her being.

She did not, it is true, go to preach the gospel in foreign lands, she did not employ herself in the work of instructing youth, nor in caring for the aged nor the poor. Wherein then lies the value of her life? It is in the imitation of the hidden life of our Savior in its perpetual sacrifice of prayer and mortification. That our portrait of the deceased may be a true one we have not passed over her faults and weaknesses. We think it encouraging to the pious reader to know that holy persons and saints have had their faults and passions, their combats and struggles, and the degree of holiness and union with God which they attained was the result of earnest effort and continual sacrifice.

Perhaps not all our readers are familiar with the lives

of St. Clare and St. Colette. For these we add a brief narration of the most notable facts in their histories.

The Order of Poor Clares owes its name to St. Clare, spiritual daughter of St. Francis of Assisi. After founding his first Order, that of the Friars Minor, the saint established, under the government of St. Clare, its first abbess, his second Order, the Poor Ladies of St. Clare or Poor Clares. This little foundation was made at the monastery of St. Damian at Assisi, and here the holy abbess lived for forty-two years, dying in 1253. The Rule which St. Francis gave her was approved by Pope Innocent IV and is known as the First Rule of St. Clare.

During the first years great fervor reigned in the newly founded Order, which soon spread from Italy into France and other European countries. But after some time it began to share the common fate of almost all religious Orders—relaxations crept in, which became so general that about two hundred years after the death of St. Clare it would have been hard to find one convent in which the original austerity of life and religious discipline were preserved.

About this time God raised up St. Colette to reform the Order and bring it back to its primitive fervor. This fervent lover of evangelical poverty, after having sought in vain for a community in which the Rule of St. Clare was faithfully observed, was living the life of a recluse near the Benedictine abbey of Corbie in France. In her seclusion she heard the voice of God bidding her go and reform the Order of St. Clare. At first she resisted, but when God deprived her of both sight and speech, she recognized His almighty hand and submitted to His will, whereupon her sight and speech were immediately restored. God continued to in-

struct her in regard to her mission by means of visions and voices, and chose Father Henry de Baume of the Order of St. Francis and the Baroness de Brissay to aid her in the great work.

Having obtained dispensation from the vow of enclosure which she had made when entering her hermitage, St. Colette set out for Nice, there to present herself before Benedict XIII, then recognized in France as the Supreme Pontiff (this was at the time of that unhappy schism which divided Christiandom and so cruelly rent the hearts of the faithful children of the church). He received her with fatherly benevolence and granted her petition to be allowed to make profession of the Rule of St. Clare and to reform the three Orders of St. Francis. Like St. Theresa she gave herself with great zeal to the work of reformation and founded many monasteries in France, Italy, Spain, Belgium and Germany.

To insure in her foundations the perfect observance of the First Rule of St. Clare, she wrote explanations and developments of this Rule which are known as the Constitutions of St. Colette, and which are faithfully observed to this day in the different monasteries founded by her and in those established from them.

The communities of West Park (formerly Cleveland) and Chicago belong to this reform.

Saint Colette died on March 6, 1447, in her monastery at Ghent. Some time afterward, this community sent out members to establish a foundation at Tongres, which in its turn established the one at Dusseldorf, where Mother M. Veronica passed the first years of her religious life.

CHAPTER I.

CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH.

Mother Mary Veronica was born June 16, 1845, at Oldenburg, Germany. She was the eldest of eight children. Descended from an ancient, illustrious and thoroughly Catholic family, Mary learned upon her mother's knee to know and love the Savior and His blessed Mother and to fold her little hands in prayer. One day her mother asked a pious missionary priest for his blessing on the little one. He took her upon his arm and with such emphasis that his words made a deep and lasting impression, told her mother that the child would grow up to be the joy and consolation of her parents. In her second year the playing of a band of musicians passing her father's house gave her a nervous shock which threw her into convulsions and nearly caused her death. But with the help of God, who destined her for a long and useful career in His service, she recovered and there were no disadvantageous consequences.

At an early age Mary showed a pious disposition, delight in prayer and all religious exercises. She wore the sacred names of Jesus and Mary in a locket on her breast. A picture of St. Clare of Assisi represented with a skull in her hand drew her toward this saint who was one day to become her spiritual mother, and inspired her with contempt of all things worldly and perishable. At a tender age her goodness of heart manifested itself in her compassion and love for the poor. One day meeting a poor woman carrying

a heavy load, she could not rest until she had taken part of the burden upon herself. When she was eight years old her mother gave her as a Christmas present a doll dressed like a nun, this pleased her more than any of her other gifts; she kept its little habit and rosary until she herself took the religious dress. From her twelfth year she thought and spoke of becoming a religious when she would be grown up, and this desire never left her, to it she referred all she did.

Mary was an intelligent, lively, wide-awake child, of deep feeling, full of humorous ideas. Her pleasantries often amused but never wounded. In the year 1853 her father retired from his military post and removed with his family to their country seat. Here Mary met with her first great sorrow—the death of her beloved mother, whose pride and joy she was. She died shortly after the birth of twins, of an affection of the throat, on June 26, 1856, having been repeatedly fortified during her illness by the reception of the sacraments, and being entirely resigned to the will of God. During the last years of her life her health had been failing, but, notwithstanding this, she had devoted herself to her household duties and the education of her childen, whose hearts clung to their mother. She was devoted to the poor and sick whose consoler she was, and to whom she often sent her children with little presents that they, too, might early learn to have compassion on the suffering. To great piety she united rare intellectual gifts, firmness of will and a most amiable disposition.

In the autumn of 1857 Mary was sent to her maternal grandparents to be educated with her step-aunt Frances, who was of the same age as herself; a pious child of most happy disposition, who wished even at that time to become

MOTHER M. VERONICA'S MOTHER.

a nun. The two girls helped each other to overcome their faults, to employ their time well and to grow in virtue. When they were at the country seat they went to mass daily with their governess in the neighboring parish church, but in winter when at Munster they heard mass at the monastery of Poor Clares near by, and here, as Mary related later on, the thought first occurred to her to enter the Order of St. Clare. To her great joy she was once allowed to accompany her grandmother on a visit to a relative or friend in this convent. All that she heard this sister tell of their manner of life charmed her, particularly the nocturnal office, the perpetual fast and abstinence and the bare feet. In her innocence and simplicity she asked questions regarding austerities of which she had read in the lives of the saints, inquiring whether the Poor Clares also slept on the bare ground, wore hair shirts, took the discipline, etc., which caused much merriment among the sisters.

Each year on the feast of St. Theresa, Mary and Frances visited an aunt who was superior of the convent of the Good Shepherd. As it was the Rev. Mother's name'sday they were allowed to enter the enclosure, and to their delight were dressed as little nuns, Frances being superior and Mary her subject. At noon they took dinner in the convent refectory with the community, observing all the ceremonies and customs of the sisters.

Even while so young Mary endeavored to be punctually obedient in the smallest matters. For her nights rest a certain number of hours had been fixed to which she kept most conscientiously; in the morning she could be seen in her bed, watch in hand, waiting for the time to arise. With most tender solicitude she guarded her innocence and purity

of heart, which she loved above everything, and which impressed its seal upon her whole exterior.

Both she and Frances had a great desire to impose mortifications upon themselves and were ingenious in thinking out practices which seemed to them extremely difficult. But they were by no means morose, Mary was even called by her playmates "funny Mieke." Both girls were always cheerful and full of fun; many a humorous poem dates from those days. In little annoyances their motto was "What cannot be cured must be endured." Or they would say to each other, "What if we do sometimes meet opposition, such things must be expected in human life."

With great fervor Mary prepared for her First Holy Communion, which she received on April 25, 1859, in the cathedral of Munster, not having quite completed her fourteenth year. Even now after her death there are persons still living, who remember with emotion and edification her piety and recollection when preparing for and receiving the Blessed Sacrament.

In the spring of 1860 Mary was sent for a higher education to the boarding school of the Visitandines at Muhlheim on the Mohne. With greatest fidelity she fulfilled all her duties; she studied diligently, took an active part in the games, even when she did not enjoy them, and she endeavored seriously to correct her natural absentmindedness and lack of punctuality. Soon she was a model for all the pupils, beloved by all for her pleasant, affable manners and esteemed by her teachers. She rejoiced in little humiliations and never tried to avoid them. One day, when, on account of some misunderstanding she was exposed to the laughter of the other pupils, she did not seek to enlighten them. She

calmly received every correction, even though undeserved, without excusing herself. As she alone accused herself, according to the rules of the school, of every little fault, before the mistress of boarders, such as leaving things lying around, allowing doors to slam, forgetfulness, etc., she drew down upon herself many a severe reprimand. In after years she once said very humbly, "That sister even then had a just opinion of me." Nevertheless, this sister as well as the Mother Superior, both of whom knew of Mary's inclination for the religious life, wished that she might one day enter one of their French communities.

In the spring of 1862 Mary, accompanied by the good wishes and blessings of her teachers, left the boarding school to return to her grandparents. She was now grown up. God had given her good health, rare intellectual gifts, and a pleasing appearance. She was of medium height, strongly built, had a complexion in which glowed the flush of health, brown hair, beautiful brown eyes. At her father's wish she tried to acquire, under her grandmother's direction, a knowledge of housekeeping, and with Frances took part in the festivities of the following winter. Though always cheerfully taking part in all, she remained unmoved by the gaieties of the world. She gave herself up with great fidelity to her spiritual exercises and endeavored to walk continually in the presence of God. She and Frances had agreed upon a sign which was to remind them of it. Even in the midst of distractions, at social entertainments, they so constantly kept God's presence before their eyes, and preserved such interior recollection that they had no fear of receiving Holy Communion on the following morning.

For some years Mary's father had been longing to have

her with him again. In 1863 his wish was gratified and Mary returned home. With affection, zeal and good success Mary fulfilled her household duties, and directed the education of her four youngest brothers, the eldest being at a college elsewhere, and her only sister, still at boarding school. Always unselfish, Mary never allowed herself to be influenced by caprice, keeping on all occasions her calm and self possession; nothing was able to rob her of her peace of soul. She willingly took upon herself anything unpleasant, whether this was an errand for her father in the worst kind of weather, or concerned business matters, with which at his request she helped him. She made sketches from nature for her father, copied old coins which could hardly be recognized, played chess with him, helped her brothers with their lessons and watched over them during their work. Whenever any of the children were ill she nursed them in her loving and skillful way, yielding amiably to their wishes. However much occupied she might be, she always found time for others, trying to help whenever she could. This she did with so much winsomeness that with her sympathetic manners she won all hearts. If she looked upon a thing as her duty nothing could deter her from it. She acted according to this in the education of her little brothers, using severity when necessary. She once had occasion to use the rod when her brother had been repeatedly disobedient, but she afterwards wept bitterly at the remembrance of the willingness with which he held out his hands for punishment.

Any praise from others was painful to her and she anxiously avoided saying anything to her own advantage lest she might have thoughts of self-complacency. Her greatest delight at Christmas time was to give little presents

THE LITTLE BARONESS

to the poor from her own savings, seeking to surprise them and to remain unknown. She often visited the sick and not only consoled them with her sympathetic manner, but tried to relieve them in every possible way. Once she prepared a sweet dish for a poor consumptive girl who had a great longing for it. At some distance from her home there lived a poor girl who had been for a number of years confined to her bed, and whose body was covered with sores. A good woman came every day to look after this poor invalid, to arrange her room and to try to make her comfortable. But after some time she began to notice, on her arrival in the morning, that the work was all done, everything put in order, the invalid washed and well cared for. When questioned as to who had been there the girl answered that she could not tell. Then the woman resolved to come before her accustomed time in hope of meeting the mysterious visitor. One morning her curiosity was gratified, for as she entered the room a young lady hastily arose from her knees at the sick girl's bedside. It was Mary, who had spent the night with her and who now retired, her face flushed with embarrassment. No wonder that after such vigils, nature asserted its rights during the day. Naturally she required much sleep, but to this she paid no heed when engaged in her works of charity and devotion. In the morning she usually went to six o'clock mass, that she might be home again in time for breakfast. But it often happened that she fell asleep in the evening over her needlework; on one such occasion she called out the name of the Blessed Virgin in her dream, and was afterwards much embarrassed when she was teased about it. During sermons also she was sometimes overpowered by sleep. This was once the occasion for

the impertinent question from a boy who stood near her pew, "Girl, are you sleeping?" whereupon she awoke and did not fall asleep again.

Mary had a special devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and to the Blessed Virgin, to whom, she said, she addressed with particular confidence the petition, "Show thyself a mother." Every day she visited the Blessed Sacrament and, as far as her household duties left her free to do so, took part in all the devotions of the church. She belonged to the Tabernacle Society and assisted at its weekly meetings. When the Blessed Sacrament was exposed she remained immovable on her knees before It like an adoring angel, for so long a time that those who saw her supposed she did not even leave the church to take food. She went to confession every week and received Holy Communion two or three times a week besides on all feast days. In this as in all important matters she followed the advice of her director, a pious and enlightened religious of the Franciscan Order, Fr. Cassian by name. With a firm and sure hand he led her on in the way of perfection. Mary's fervor was so great that he frequently had to hold her back. She not only wore extremely plain clothing, but preferred old and poor things, feeling that for herself anything was good enough. Only through regard for others and when she could not well avoid it did she take part in social amusements, and this very rarely. She fasted frequently, wore a cilice, the points of which caused her great pain because she had to wear it under her tight clothing. She also practiced other works of penance invented by her zeal. Her confessor, however, kept her within due limits. He would not allow her to impose too great privations upon herself which would

have ruined her health and rendered her unfit for the religious life. She was forbidden to retrench her food on Sundays and feast days, and Mary afterwards said in her simple way that she was quite content. Fr. Cassian, however, placed the greatest importance upon interior mortification, to which he exhorted her again and again and with such success that later on he could say to an acquaintance, "Yes, she was mortified." He also helped her greatly in regard to that scrupulosity from which she had suffered from childhood. Thanks to her strict obedience she was now able to get along better with this. Obedience was a virtue which she practiced during her whole lifetime to a remarkable degree. After she had entered the community of Poor Clares the confessor of the community expressed some fears on account of her scrupulosity. "Why," Fr. Cassian asked, "does she not obey?" When the confessor replied in the affirmative, Fr. Cassian said, "Well, then, you have it all in your own hands." The future indeed proved this. The abbess one day asked him in pleasantry if he could not send her more such postulants.

Shortly after Mary's return home in 1865, God gave her a true, self-sacrificing friend, of unalterable fidelity in all circumstances of life and even beyond the grave. This young lady came of a pious family, her father being a wealthy merchant. Two brothers and two uncles were priests. She strove with great zeal to attain perfection and had also made choice of the conventual life, but her confessor declared that her duties towards her parents were such as to make her entrance into religion practically impossible.

CHAPTER II.

VOCATION.

Mary was not quite twenty-one years of age when after fervent prayer and mature consultation with her confessor, she resolved to enter the order of St. Clare. She had previously made a careful study of its Rules and Constitutions with the kind assistance of the abbess of the monastery at Munster. She had also studied the Rules of the Carmelites, for whose great mother St. Theresa she had a special veneration. According to her own statement the motive which influenced Mary's final decision was the greater austerity of the Poor Clares, particularly the stricter poverty and the nocturnal Office. She felt no inclination to enter the Visitandine Order, although she received an urgent invitation from Muhlheim. Nor did she feel inclined toward any other active Order, although many made efforts to gain her. Her confessor had decided that after making a novena, Mary should on May 31, 1866, ask her father's permission for her entrance into the Order of Poor Clares. The day seemed as unhappily chosen as it well could have been. Her father was absent all day and did not return home until late at night. But obedient, as always, she nevertheless made her petition at this late hour. Deeply moved, her father replied that while he really had no objection, still, on account of existing circumstances he could not give his consent as long as he lived. And in fact it would hardly have been possible at the time. Her younger sister possessed neither

the health nor knowledge requisite for the management of the difficult household affairs, nor had she the necessary authority over her brothers. Mary was happy in not having been altogether refused, and, although she might have obtained the desired permission had she insisted, she contented herself with her father's decision, as her confessor had declared that she was first to fulfill her immediate filial duties before thinking of those higher and more distant ones. Thus, according to human calculations, the fulfillment of her heart's wish still seemed a long way off, but God had ordained otherwise. On the fourteenth of the following February, the beloved father, after a short illness, catarrh of the lungs, had a stroke of paralysis, which, attacking his heart, so suddenly ended his life that neither the priest nor physician who were immediately summoned arrived in time. The last consolations of religion, therefore, could not be given him, but the prayers of his daughter who knelt at his side accompanied his soul to the judgment seat of God. A few weeks before his death he had, with ardent devotion and after careful preparation, received the Holy Sacraments. He was a man of noble character, great goodness of heart and unassuming piety; a faithful son of the holy Catholic Church.

The guardians decided that the children should remain together if Mary were willing, as hitherto, to take care of them. She was ready for the sacrifice however great her yearning for the religious life, and she continued faithfully to fulfill her duties, but she was to wait only two years. On July 19, 1868, one of her brothers was drowned while bathing, probably in consequence of a stroke of paralysis. This was an intense sorrow to Mary, for his many good qualities

CASTLE WHERE MARY'S GIRLHOOD WAS SPENT.

of heart and mind had given ground for the highest hopes for him. When, shortly after this, her brother Karl was sent to prepare for his examination, the guardians broke up the household and sent the two youngest brothers to college. The eldest brother was already stationed at Constance as officer of an infantry regiment, and her only sister had for some time been living with an uncle.

Nothing now stood in Mary's way, and she no longer hesitated to take the step. The prospect of an advantageous marriage for which an opportunity was offered just at this time, made so little impression on her that she did not even care to know the name. Neither did she allow her resolution to be shaken by the arguments of different distinguished persons, who said she could better employ her gifts and talents in an active Order, that it would be wrong to bury them within the cloister walls; that on account of her health and early training she would not be able to endure for any length of time the rigors of the Rule of St. Clare, the secluded and monotonous life, etc. But the germ of that vocation which God in early childhood had implanted in her soul, had taken too deep root to be destroyed by human arguments and reasonings. Enlightened from above she recognized the value of the interior life "hidden with Christ in God," and knew that she could not better employ her talents and abilities than to dedicate them wholly and undividedly to the service of their Creator. The thirty years of hidden life which Jesus led at Nazareth were her highest ideal, and with all the ardor of her pure, loving soul she longed for that "better part," which Mary Magdalene at the feet of Jesus had chosen. A soul so unselfish and self-sacrificing as our Mary's, could not, however, have an

eye only to her own sanctification without any thought for the interests of her neighbor. If God had so willed it she would have been ready to work with indefatigable zeal, like the most zealous missionaries, for the spiritual and corporal welfare of her neighbor and even to give her life's blood for it, but, in the school of the divine Master hidden under the lowly form of bread, she had learned that the prayer of a soul truly dead to self and the world contributes more to the welfare of mankind than do the greatest efforts of human activity, because it draws down God's blessing and appeases His just anger. This end Mary had in view, this height she hoped to attain, in entering the Order of St. Clare, whose members besides laboring for their own perfection, are under the obligation of offering themselves continually to God as living victims, by a life of prayer and penance, for the interests of the holy church, for the whole world and particularly for the conversion of sinners. Filled with these sublime thoughts, she, in the interior of her soul, recognized the hollowness of all those arguments urged against her choice of a vocation, and even had the whole world stood up in opposition against her, she would have fought her way through all. These magnanimous sentiments, this invincible resolution did not prevent the parting with her sister and brothers, to whom she had for so long been a second mother, being very painful to her, but she had accomplished her duty to the best of her ability and could therefore follow with tranquility of mind the call of God who desired to have her all for Himself.

About this same time Frances entered the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. As Fr. Cassian had advised Mary to enter the monastery of Poor Clares at Dusseldorf

which was under the direction of the energetic Abbess Mother Marie of the Immaculate Conception she there applied, and was received for May 1, 1869. Her grandmother, sister and faithful friend accompanied her to Dusseldorf on the long desired day. At the convent gate Mary took leave of the last loved ones, who had been dear to her in the world, to give herself wholly to God.

Even in religion Mary preserved a faithful and loving remembrance of her dear ones with whom she still sympathized in joy and sorrow. She was ever ready to give them the aid of her prayers in all their needs, and they often experienced with gratitude the efficacy of her prayers as well as of those of the whole community. Her beautiful letters were so full of consolation and encouragement that they exercised, and still continue to exercise, a most beneficial influence.

CHAPTER III.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

After Mary had taken leave of her friends, the cloister doors opened, and the ardent prayer of many years was answered—she crossed the threshold of the enclosure.*

A feeling of holy awe came over her in presence of the long file of deeply veiled nuns, who welcomed her cordially and led her to the choir. With deep emotion she greeted for the first time in this holy place, her heavenly Bridegroom hidden in the Blessed Sacrament, who awaited her, His hands filled with graces and consolations.

Perhaps it will not weary the reader to follow Mary somewhat closely through her first day in the convent, and thus get a peep, as it were, into the daily life of these inhabitants of the cloister.

After a short but fervent prayer, Mary followed the abbess, who put on her the black cape and bonnet worn by postulants. Then, Mother Marie being also mistress of novices, she led the new postulant to the novitiate and began briefly to instruct her in the customs of the Order, telling her how she was to conduct herself in the choir, the refectory, the assemblies of the community, in the novitiate, the cell, etc. She explained the different community exercises, telling her their signification and how she might perform them in a manner most pleasing to God.

* To enter the enclosure of contemplative Orders the permission of ecclesiastical superiors is necessary.

After Mary had received the most necessary instructions to enable her to conform to the community, the abbess took her through the building. All breathed the greatest poverty, simplicity and cleanliness. The corridors were so narrow that only on the first floor could two persons walk side by side, on the upper floor they were obliged to go single file. As the monastery was built in the form of a square, Mary imagined that it had no exit, and indeed, they came to the place whence they started without her perceiving her mistake, the doors leading out into the yard being farther beyond. Mother Marie then showed her the cell she was to occupy and withdrew. As soon as Mary found herself alone in the silent convent cell for which she had yearned for so many years, she could no longer contain herself, and her interior jubilation broke forth in ardent affections of gratitude and love towards the all merciful God. Then she looked about and examined the furniture of her new abode. The little room was hardly big enough to contain the bedstead of raw, unpainted wood, with its straw tick stuffed almost as hard as a board and bedding of dark woolen blankets without sheets, a little stand with curtains in front in which the necessary linen was to be kept, and a stool to sit upon. The only ornaments on the white walls were a few small religious pictures pasted on cardboard, with a black paper border for a frame. The window was so high up that one could not look out of it without standing on something. In her great love of holy poverty, Mary felt supremely happy at this more than ordinary simplicity and lack of everything superfluous.

After some time the refectory bell rang, and the abbess came to call her for collation. She pointed out to her her

place at table, the last, of course, but Mary had always longed and continued to long until the hour of her death for the last place. The dry bread received as alms and the simple evening drink seemed to her more delicious than the viands at the most sumptuous banquet. She was pleased and edified when, after the little repast, the abbess and all the sisters knelt down and asked pardon of each other for all the faults they might have committed during the day, that with greater purity of heart they might be able to receive Holy Communion on the following morning. Then the abbess read the names of the persons who had given alms on that day and recommended them and their particular intentions to the prayers of the sisters at Holy Communion and the other spiritual exercises. After collation they went in procession to the choir, reciting the psalm "Miserere." Compline, examination of conscience, and night prayers followed. Bed time came at the early hour of 8 o'clock, because from 12 to 2 the sisters are again in the choir for matins and meditation.

With a heart filled with the joy and peace of heaven Mary retired to rest. She was not allowed to arise when the bell rang at 12 o'clock for matins, but she nourished the hope of soon being able, during the silent hours of the night, to sing the praises of God with the spouses of Christ and to pray before the Blessed Sacrament.

As soon as the bell rang for rising in the morning, Mary was upon her feet, notwithstanding the lameness of her back and neck caused by the unaccustomed hardness of the bed. Her toilet was soon made, for on the night before coming to the convent she had cut her hair off, that she might be able to get ready more quickly in the morning, for

she was afraid that when she got there they would not let her do this. Later in life she once related this circumstance to a lady, who remarked that she must have been very firm in her resolution of never leaving the convent. "Oh," she replied, "I thought one must give up all this vanity some time, anyhow."

With unassuming modesty Mary took her place in choir, which had the advantage of being nearest the altar. After the Angelus, at quarter past five, the other spiritual exercises followed in uninterrupted succession, morning prayer, meditation, the Office of Prime and Tierce, mass and Holy Communion followed by a long thanksgiving, and finally prayers for different intentions. When at 8 o'clock a bell rang Mary went with the sisters to the refectory, not, however, to take breakfast, (for, excepting on Sundays the Poor Clares fast every day,) but to receive the morning greeting and blessing of the vicaress, and to have their work for the day assigned them. It was just the time of the year that caterpillars were ravaging the garden, so the sisters of the novitiate were told to go out and help the sister who had charge of the garden to destroy them.

From the refectory Mary was led to the novitiate where the younger sisters assembled every morning for a short spiritual exercise. Here a certain number of acts of virtue for particular intentions is imposed, to be practiced during the day. After the others had withdrawn Mary remained with her mistress, who, according to custom, showed her the Office for the day, pointing out the places in the breviary and instructing her concerning it. Mother Marie had the gift of inspiring her pupils with love and veneration for this sublime form of prayer which the holy church imposes upon

her privileged children. Her own heart glowed with enthusiasm when she sang in choir and performed, as St. Colette expresses it, "the holy and sublime Office of the almighty and supreme King at which the angels of heaven attend." Her strong and deep voice was heard above all the others, and revealed how her soul was penetrated with that with her lips pronounced. The new postulant quickly grasped the deep significance and transcendent beauty of the Divine Office, and as she, too, was gifted with a remarkably strong voice, which even in the cradle had won for her the name of "the little trumpet," she added not a little to the strength of the choir.

When Mary first heard about killing the caterpillars she did not think that would be a very hard task, but went forth boldly to the slaughter, throwing them on the ground and crushing them under her shoes. But the work soon proved not to be so easy as she had thought, for the little creatures were so numerous that nausea finally overcame her; wherever she went she saw crushed caterpillars, at meals, in the choir, in her cell, everywhere. We may imagine what her delicately reared nature suffered from this.

The bell announcing the preparation for Sext and None brought a temporary relief. After the Divine Office came the particular examen and then dinner followed. All that Mary saw and heard served to show her that in religious life even the most ordinary actions may be performed in a holy manner. The modesty of the sisters, their serious and profound silence, the exercises of humility and penance, the spiritual reading which lasted during the whole repast, all this impressed upon her mind that even in the refectory the soul as well as the body may find nourishment. The

food was simple and nutritious and served in sufficient quantity, but on account of the vision of the caterpillars, Mary had to do violence to herself to eat at all. After dinner came the prayers of thanksgiving in the choir; then at a signal of the bell the community assembled in the chapter room, where, after the order for the divine Office had been announced, our new postulant was introduced to each of the sisters and the hour of recreation began. The sisters so cordially expressed their pleasure at having her in their midst and Mary was so happy to be among persons whose whole life was devoted to spiritual things and from whom she heard so much to edify and encourage her, that during the afternoon caterpillar hunting lost some of its terrors. At half-past three the bell called them again to the choir for an half hour's silent prayer, Vespers of the divine Office, Office of the Dead and the Way of the Cross. The rest of the afternoon was like that of the preceding day—with a half hour just before collation, when the sisters might read a spiritual book if they wished, collation, Compline and night prayers. Thus ended Mary's first day in the convent. In much the same way and amid the same round of spiritual exercises and work passed all the days of her life, and as even on this first day she had courageously carried the light cross which her divine Master placed upon her, so did she continue to bear its ever increasing weight until death.

CHAPTER IV.

THE NOVICE.

Rev. Mother Marie of the Immaculate Conception soon began to recognize the deep piety and solid virtue of her postulant, and, to correspond to the intentions of God who evidently called her to a high degree of perfection, she began shortly after her entrance to treat her as a strong soul, and to accustom her to the hardships and burdens of religious life. Even during the first days she might be seen helping the sisters at the hardest and most common work, in the performance of which she showed as much diligence as if she had always been accustomed to it. One day it was noticed how, after sweeping a dirty gutter in the courtyard, she scraped the sweepings upon the pan with her fingers instead of using the broom. Another time she was seen employing all her strength raking hay, and all the time never once raising her eyes. Mortifications like that of caterpillar hunting came to her repeatedly, but her love of the cross had grown so strong that she no longer feared but rather sought them. The abbess once told the sisters to kill all the harmful insects they came across. In her great conscientiousness and love of obedience Mary looked upon this as a strict order which she tried to fulfill with all possible exactness. Later on she said that it seemed to her at that time that God sent all those insects to her, and inspired her with the idea of killing them in the manner most repugnant to her nature. She disliked most of all, because they

were so soft, the large moths which swarmed about the light in summer time and regularly visited her. Nevertheless she felt herself obliged to overcome her feelings and to try to catch and kill them in the manner most offensive to her.

By her pleasant, modest and affable manner Mary soon won all hearts; wherever she could render a service or give help she did so with joy, and by her attention often anticipated requests. It sometimes happened that she received so many of these from different sides that she did not know what to do first or how to serve all. But she always preserved her tranquility, which was grounded upon her intimate union with God. In Him she saw all, to Him she referred all, for Him she did and suffered all. This practice of the presence of God to which she had been devoted for so many years, impressed upon her whole exterior the stamp of such recollection and religious modesty that no one could approach her without being penetrated with a feeling of reverence.

Being long accustomed to austerities of every kind, and filled with the desire of making sacrifices for her Beloved, she found nothing which the Rules or customs of the Order imposed too hard or difficult, but with ardent longing looked forward to the day when, being clothed with the habit of St. Clare, she would be introduced still farther into the rigors of religious life. Her exemplary conduct hastened this time, and after a postulate of but six weeks June 23 was fixed as the day of her clothing. With great fervor and devotion she prepared for the important step during the days of retreat which preceded it.

Her family and acquaintances had been invited and all preparations had been made to enhance the beauty of the

feast. Following the custom in the clothing of a Poor Clare, Mary, arrayed as a bride, went out of the enclosure on the morning of the solemnity. Here, in the extern part of the house, she was greeted by her relatives and her old friend who did not want to lose this last opportunity of seeing her outside the grille. Mary's love of poverty manifested itself even on this occasion; she had requested her relatives to give to the community as an alms the money they intended to spend on a silk dress, while she would content herself with a simple woolen one. To please her they had indeed acceded to her request, but the white dress and mantilla of finest white cashmere with its long train and red trimmings (her father's military colors) and above all the natural grace and noble bearing of her who wore it, proclaimed her illustrious birth and position far more than any robe of silk could have done. But incomparably more beautiful were the spiritual graces with which our Lord had adorned His bride, so that she could say with St. Agnes, "He has placed a sign upon my countenance that I may recognize no other lover besides Him. My right hand and my neck He has encircled with precious stones, my ears He has adorned with priceless pearls and He has surrounded me with radiant gems."

The signal for the opening of the solemnity was given, there was a great clangor of swords and spurs of officers and rustling of ladies' silk trains, as the large chapel rapidly filled to overflowing, for besides the relatives nearly the whole nobility of the vicinity was represented. Then at the entrance of the chapel appeared Mary, accompanied by her bridesmaid and holding in her right hand the end of the stole of the officiating priest, who led her to the foot of the altar near which a place had been prepared for her. As

she knelt down the celebrant intoned the *"Veni Sponsa Christi,"* * which was finished by the choir. She was then led to her place and solemn high mass began. The singing, of solemn and churchly style, was by the Franciscan scholastics. After the communion of the priest Mary also received her divine Spouse in the Sacrament of His love. How happy she felt when at this solemn moment she could say: "Thou art all mine and I am all Thine." Although the bonds of perpetual vows did not yet unite her to Him forever, her intention of remaining in the Order to the end, was as firm as if she had already made her profession. The question of the priest, after the mass was over, called her out of her profound recollection. "What do you wish?" were his words, and she in a clear and firm voice replied, "Reverened Father, I ask and desire for the love of God, the habit of the Order of St. Clare according to the reform of St. Colette, that I may serve God better by the observance of the holy Rule and His commandments." Then the priest turning to the people delivered an impressive sermon, taking for his text the words: "The kingdom of the world and all earthly pomp I have despised for the love of my Lord Jesus Christ, Whom I have seen, Whom I have loved, in Whom I have believed, Whom I have chosen." The preacher spoke so convincingly and with such enthusiasm of the emptiness of all earthly goods, and of the happiness of those, who for God's sake leave all and offer themselves as a sacrifice to Him, that all were deeply moved. Mary, however, did not like the text as well as she might otherwise have done, for she had found it in the divine Office on the common of those sainted women

* Come, spouse of Christ, receive the crown which the Lord has prepared for thee from eternity.

not virgins. We mention this to show her great love for virginity, which she prized above all the treasures of the world.

Following the ceremonial the priest now asked, "Do you still hold to your desire of receiving the habit of penance of St. Clare?" "Yes, through the grace of God, Rev. Father." "Are you ready in the order of Poor Clares to be always obedient, and to live in entire subjection for the love of God?" "Yes, through the grace of God, Rev. Father." The priest then said the following prayer: May the almighty and merciful God strengthen you in your pious purpose and grant you His grace to put it into effect, that you may persevere with zeal and piety to the end of your life in the state which you are now about to embrace. The Litany of the Saints in an abridged form was then said, and Mary, with her bridesmaid who carried a lighted candle, knelt at the foot of the altar to receive the general absolution, before receiving which she said the Confiteor aloud; they then returned to their places and the celebrant blessed the religious garments—habit, veil and cord.

Once more the bride was led to the foot of the altar, blessed and sprinkled with holy water. Then, kneeling on the same step with the priest, she intoned the first verse of each stanza of the *Veni Creator,* the choir each time taking up the refrain and completing it to the end. The priest sang the verses and oration.

The moment had now come when Mary was to be solemnly introduced into the enclosure of the monastery, and the procession was formed to conduct her thither. First came a number of acolytes carrying censer, holy water, etc. Others followed bearing the religious clothing in prettily

decorated baskets, then came a number of priests in surplice and stole, and finally Mary, her bridesmaid at her side, wearing her long veil and bridal wreath and carrying the lighted candle, and last of all the celebrant. All those in the chapel followed. Arrived at the enclosure door the line opened to enable the celebrant, the bride and maid to pass through.

A procession of another kind awaited them here. Between the two large folding doors situated at some distance from and exactly opposite to each other, and which had now been thrown open, stood a long line of nuns in mantles and veils, at the head of which was the abbess and a sister carrying a large crucifix. As from the depth of the grave came the monotonous chant, *Regnum mundi,* the same words which had served as text for the sermon. Mary had knelt down at the threshold, the celebrant stood beside her and the other priests stood in rank behind. Round about stood the crowd of illustrious spectators.

When the chant of the religious was ended the voice of the abbess was heard: "Daughter, what do you wish?"

Mary in a loud and clear voice answered: "Reverened Mother, I beg and pray you for the love of God to admit me into this community of the Order of the holy Mother St. Clare, therein to serve God, to do penance and to correct my life."

To remind her both of the greatness and difficulty of her obligations the abbess continued: "Do you earnestly desire to carry the cross of Christ all your lifetime in our holy Order?"

"Yes, Rev. Mother," answered Mary in a firm voice. "I have no other intention, and I hope the Lord will give

me the grace and strength necessary to carry it according to His holy will."

The abbess took the crucifix from the sister at her side and presenting it to Mary said: "Take, dear bride, this cross that by it you may acquire a great reward and glory eternal."

Mary, with fervent devotion, kissed the feet of the image of our crucified Savior, the cross was returned to the sister, who slowly retired, while the bride, turning toward the celebrant said: "Bless, Rev. Father, my entrance into this holy Order." The priest sprinkling her with holy water answered: "Blessed be such an exit, far more blessed such an entrance. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." It was indeed a perfect exit from the world and an entrance into the house of God, the secure barque of salvation.

All present knelt down at this solemn moment. In breathless attention they had followed the scene, and God only saw the thoughts and sentiments which stirred their hearts. Many an eye had filled with tears; and her relatives could no longer control their emotion, when their beloved Mary, before entering the enclosure, turned toward them and in her charming way bowed most graciously. They saw the abbess lovingly embrace her spiritual daughter and lead her through the ranks of the sisters, and then she was lost to view as the nuns closed in behind her and the same low chant was continued. Two sisters took in the religious garments and closed the doors. In silence the crowd returned to the chapel to await the end of the ceremony.

Meanwhile Mary had been led to the chapter room where all was in readiness. The religious garments had been placed upon a table covered with a white cloth. Before the

great crucifix lay a carpet and a cushion. At both sides of the room were long benches. The abbess beckoned to Mary to kneel upon the cushion while the sisters took their places on the benches. Saying the customary prayers, the abbess clothed Mary with the religious garments. Her face shone with joy when she saw herself stripped of all worldly ornaments, and invested with the thick woolen habit of St. Clare. Her head was covered with the white veil of the novice, and a long heavy mantle completed the religious garb. Thus she stood, a burning candle the symbol of divine love, in her hand, while the choir recited a psalm followed by a few prayers said kneeling. Then the abbess sitting down beckoned to the new novice; as she knelt before her, all listened attentively for she was now to receive the name by which she would hereafter be known. The novice herself looked up expectantly to her superior, who said, "You shall in future bear the name Sister Mary Veronica."

Her patron then was to be the Poor Clare Capuchine, St. Veronica Giuliani, that faithful lover of Jesus crucified, who bore so deeply in her heart the memory of the sufferings of her divine Spouse, that after her death, the instruments of His Passion were found miraculously engraven upon it. At the exhortation of her superior to imitate the virtues of this great saint, Mary felt the desire for sanctity and the perfect love of God increase within her.

Two sisters now approached the happy bride and led her from one to another of the community, until from each she had received that fraternal salutation which the church calls the kiss of peace, meanwhile the choir sang the psalm, *"Ecce quam bonum*"*

* Behold how good and delightful it is for brethren to dwell together in union.

A few minutes later the impatient throng in the chapel was greeted by the sight of the new novice at the grille. She knelt here during benediction of the Blessed Sacrament which followed. The *Te Deum* terminated the ceremony.

Sister Mary Veronica, as we must now call Mary, would have liked to stay a long time alone in the choir with her divine Spouse, in fervent thanksgiving, but many of those who had come for the ceremony wished to see her in her religious garb before departing. So she went to the parlor to greet her visitors through the grating. First the priests were admitted and after them the other visitors. The young novice was radiant with happiness and could not say enough of the beauty of her vocation, so that the members of her family felt repaid for the sacrifice they had made.

On this day Sister M. Veronica occupied the place of honor in the community. She sat beside the abbess in the refectory, and her cup and other articles of use were decorated with flowers. How surprised she was on entering her cell, where in the morning she had left all pertaining to a secular toilet, to find nothing of this there. All had been removed and in its place were the few articles strictly necessary for her use as a religious. This had been done for her by the younger professed sisters, her companions in the novitiate.* With great interior joy Sr. M. Veronica saw herself thus stripped of all earthly things, and in possession of that beloved poverty which reminded her of Him, "Who for love of us was wrapped in poor swaddling clothes and laid in a manger."†

---

* In the Order of Poor Clares the newly professed sisters remain in the novitiate some years after their profession to become better instructed and grounded in the religious life.

† Rule of St. Clare.

The whole community celebrated with the dear bride the feast of her happy clothing, by which she became in a true sense one of its members, entitled to its privileges and indulgences. When not at prayer the sisters were allowed to speak with her, and wherever she appeared she received heartfelt congratulations and good wishes. When it was time to go to the choir or refectory she was led in triumph between two sisters, and everywhere had the place of honor.

But more dear to her than all honors and manifestations of esteem were the increased penances which she soon became aware the livery of the poor St. Francis of Assisi imposed upon her. In the heat of July the difference between her light secular dress and the heavy, stiff habit and rough woolen underwear soon made itself felt. These cost her many drops of perspiration, and at last even wounded her delicate skin. At night when she was obliged to go to bed in her full habit and cover herself with a woolen blanket, she felt like a sick person taking a steam bath. But she paid no attention to the murmurings of nature, but raised her heart, glowing with love, to God, to thank Him once more for the graces received on this day, and like a prudent virgin prepared herself for the coming of the Bridegroom, who at midnight called her to His service and praise.

Sr. M. Veronica was now permitted to be present at matins and meditation every night, but much as her spirit rejoiced in this great grace, it brought to her body great and lasting suffering, for, on account of her natural need of a great deal of sleep, this caused a drowsiness against which she had to combat day and night, particularly during the hours of prayer. Yet she never complained of it, but on every occasion manifested her joyous enthusiasm at the

thought of being able to sing the praises of God in the night. It sometimes happened that during matins drunken men passed by the monastery, singing and making much noise; she then redoubled her fervor to make reparation to God by her prayers for the outrages committed against Him. Often she spoke of her happiness at being able to prove her fidelity and love at a time when most men, wrapped in profound slumber, forget Him, and when many watch only to offend Him.

When winter came Sr. M. Veronica found her bare feet to be another source of suffering. Often when she had work to do which took her out of doors her feet would become so benumbed with cold that she could scarcely reach the house. Even within doors her occupations were such that she rarely had a chance to use the little foot stove,* and would thus be obliged to spend the long hours of prayer in the unheated choir with her hands and feet aching from the cold. But all this was for her, after the example of her seraphic Father, St. Francis, "true Christian joy," and so added to her interior contentment that, like her superior, she never had a temptation against her holy vocation; in fact, the more she experienced the austerities of the Rule, and the greater the sacrifice she had to make for God's sake, so much the happier did she feel in her holy state.

Rev. Mother Marie of the Immaculate Conception continued with kindness and firmness to train the fervent novice to become a perfect daughter of St. Clare, and she spared neither instructions and exhortations nor rebukes and penances to help her to conquer her faults and to advance in the

* A little brazier filled with charcoal for warming the feet.

way of mortification, both exterior and interior. Her want of punctuality which ordinarily had its source in some work of charity, brought upon her many a rebuke. At one time when Mother Marie, on account of a throat trouble, had to spare her voice, she ordered Sr. Veronica to read the morning meditation in her stead. Although she read very well, the mistress of novices, to keep from her all danger of vanity, corrected her at almost every sentence; once she read too fast, then the inflection was not right, again she did not pronounce the words plainly enough, in short, it was, as Sr. Veronica later on smilingly declared, rather a lesson than a meditation, and she felt sorry that those who listened had their patience thus tried. Nevertheless, with the humility and simplicity of a child she repeated every sentence and every word in which her superior found anything to blame. She had to submit to the same trial whenever she read during meals in the refectory. She was often corrected for her slowness and forgetfulness, not only by the abbess, but probably at her command, by subordinate superiors also. Once, for example, she went to help pare potatoes, but forgot to take her knife with her. The vicaress who was helping at the work would not let her go and get it, but told her to sit down and watch the others work and to accuse herself of this fault in the refectory the next day.

Whenever a common or difficult task was to be performed it was given to Sr. M. Veronica, who discharged all her duties of whatever nature with the same willingness and affability. The trials and mortifications which Mother Marie imposed upon her were so far beyond the ordinary, that the sisters realized that she had some particular intentions concerning her; for she had herself declared that this was her

way of dealing with those whom she esteemed most highly for their virtue and greatness of soul; that thus she showed her affection for them. And, indeed, she recognized the generosity of this soul and knew her desire for mortifications and sufferings.

CHAPTER V.

THE SPOUSE OF THE CRUCIFIED.

However happy and contented Sr. M. Veronica felt as a novice, one thing was wanting to her happiness, one thing for which she constantly longed. The precious habit might be taken from her any day. The sisters had a perfect right if her health failed or if (as she feared) they judged her faults to be too great, to send her back into the world, which compared to the cloister seemed to her "a desert land where there is no way and no water."* The mere thought of it made her shudder and caused her agonies which her humility increased. She felt herself unworthy to remain in the house of the Lord, among His spouses, and feared that her many faults might exhaust the patience of her spiritual mother and sisters. Then again, the longing for her profession, in which she recognized her nuptials with the divine Bridegroom, would take possession of her, and when, after the cold winter, spring came again it seemed to her that His voice called to her: "Winter is past and gone, the rains have ceased, arise, my friend, and come."† She counted the weeks and days which must intervene before the happy moment would arrive in which she would unite herself forever to Him at "Whose beauty sun and moon are in wondering admiration."‡

According to custom the sisters had cast their votes three times during the year of Sr. Veronica's novitiate to

* Ps. 62-3. † Canticles. ‡ Off. St. Agnes.

decide whether or not she was to continue her probation, and at last whether or not she should be admitted to make her vows. Each time the result was in her favor. So, when a whole year had elapsed and the ecclesiastical superiors had granted permission for her profession, Mother Marie one day tolled the chapter bell at an unusual hour, and, when all the sisters were assembled, Sr. M. Veronica, at a sign from the abbess, advanced and kneeling in the middle of the room, humbly requested that the day of her profession be appointed. The abbess arose from her seat, and while all the sisters knelt down and the novice prostrated, she said: "For the greater glory of God, the ever blessed Virgin Mary, Saint Joseph, our holy father St. Francis, our holy mothers St. Clare and St. Colette, and all the saints, as well as for the welfare of your own soul, I, with the consent of the community, appoint as the day of your holy profession, July 8, the feast of St. Elizabeth of Portugal, provided no important obstacle intervenes." This, then, was the happy day which, in the counsels of His wisdom, our Lord had, from eternity, chosen as the day of His espousals with His beloved bride. With indescribable emotion Sr. M. Veronica thanked the community, listened to the loving admonitions of her mother, as to how she should prepare for this great event, and then hastened to the choir to pour out her heart in thanksgiving at the feet of her divine spouse.

Although during her whole novitiate, all her prayers, works and sufferings had served as a preparation for the great day, she now redoubled her fervor, in order to make the retreat which preceded her profession with all possible recollection and devotion; and, that she might not lose the fruit of this time of grace, she wrote down the following

resolutions, which she kept so faithfully, that from them we may form an idea of the principal virtues which characterized her life.

Resolutions taken during the retreat before the great day of my holy profession:

"Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"
"My heart is ready, O Lord, my heart is ready."
This shall be my disposition during these days.

I. POVERTY.

1. I will suppress all esteem of riches for the sake of the comforts connected with them, and I shall suffer no attachment to anything, and have no wish which will not be equally satisfied with having or not having a thing.

2. I will carefully avoid all superfluity.

3. I will be ready and willing to suffer the want even of necessary things.

II. PRAYER.

1. I will give myself particularly to prayer and interior recollection, for prayer is the fountain of grace, and as the prayer, so is the life. Therefore, if Mother Abbess thinks best, I will take *devotion at prayer* for the subject of my particular examen.

2. In order to preserve recollection, I will at all times keep a strict guard over my eyes, the time of recreation excepted; this greatly influences the whole interior life. (Also in choir and during religious services.)

3. I will endeavor to keep myself interiorly recollected and assiduously to converse with God.

4. I will make my daily meditation with great fervor and go to it with a holy desire.

5. During prayer I will ordinarily keep my eyes closed, because I can thus pray with more recollection.

6. At least once every hour I will remind myself of the presence of God, with the words: "Walk before me and be perfect."

7. As often as I pass by the choir I will remember Jesus Who is there present for love of me.

8. During prayer I will endeavor not to admit any distractions.

III. HUMILITY.

1. I will never try to avoid humiliations.

2. I will never excuse myself even though I should be innocent, without good reason for so doing.

3. I shall receive with dispositions of humility, corrections and all that wounds self love.

4. I shall never, unless good and sufficient reasons oblige me to do so, say anything to my own honor or praise.

5. I will be so little and submissive towards my sisters that they will look upon me as nothing, and as insignificant in every way, and will believe me incapable of being put to any particular use. I will seek to find joy and consolation in this their opinion of me.

IV. OBEDIENCE.

1. I shall always see Jesus Christ in my superiors.

2. I shall obey punctually, without the least delay, when the bell rings or the superiors call me, and I shall say

to myself: "This is the voice of the great King, let us go and offer Him gifts—gold, frankincense and myrrh."

3. I shall always look upon the will of the superiors as the will of God, and I will try to make my will conformable to theirs and to submit my judgment to theirs, so that I shall look upon all things they say or do as the best, at least for myself.

My endeavors shall be directed principally to the following:

1. Diligent practice of the presence of God.
2. Great zeal for meditation and great devotion in prayer.
3. Custody of the eyes.
4. Never to avoid humiliations, never to excuse or to justify myself.
5. To receive corrections, etc., in an humble disposition.
6. Conformity of my will with the will of my superiors, and with the will of God; for instance, in regard to the weather, heat, cold, little accidents, inconveniences, health, temptations, etc., yes, I will endeavor earnestly not to have any will at all, nor wish, which (at least as far as my will is concerned) I would not be ready to submit to the divine will.
7. The destruction of self-love and of *self*.

By my holy profession, I become *entirely* the property of God. My whole endeavor must be to belong to Him, not only in name but with my whole heart, wholly, entirely, without reserve. To this end it is necessary that I annihilate myself, that I may be able to say with my whole heart: "My

God and my *all*!" Yes, I must always be able to say this; to this all my exertions must tend.

My aim and my most ardent wish is union with God. But to attain to this, self-love, which most of all keeps us back from the supreme Good, must be destroyed by continual mortification and self-denial. In order that God may fill my heart it must be empty of all goods, of all creatures, of *self*. This is attained by mortification, renunciation and self-denial. And as, moreover, I am consecrated to God in so special a manner, in an Order which leads directly to Him, my desecration, like the desecration of the sacred vessels or the priests of the Lord, would be a sacrilege. I must consider myself as a pure, entire, perpetual "Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto," and thus conduct myself in all my thoughts, words and actions, and look upon myself as something entirely holy, consecrated to God and belonging wholly to Him. If God should visit me with dryness, disgust, languor, if self love or love of ease should make themselves felt, I will not think about these things, but gathering together the whole strength of my will, I will tend towards God, if not with my feelings, at least with my will. My God, my all, most supreme, most excellent Good, Good infinitely worthy of all love, O let me belong entirely to Thee. Do with me according to Thy good pleasure, only strengthen my will, inflame my love and direct both firmly towards Thee! Help me to overcome nature and to follow grace.

I will further consider how *necessary, useful* and *just* it is that I give myself up entirely to God.

Necessary, since by my vows I am obliged under pain of mortal sin to tend towards perfection.

Useful, in consideration of eternity. Think, what is

eternity and a higher degree of knowledge and love of God for all eternity. This I can gain daily, hourly, yes, every moment. And shall I neglect such precious occasions of practicing mortification, humility, obedience, and not make use of recollection, custody of the eyes and so many other helps? Indeed, this would be worse than wantonness, it would be folly, madness. What is time compared with eternity? What are the sufferings of soul and body compared with the beatific vision, which includes all good? O God, give me a lively faith!

Just, God has loved me from all eternity with an infinite love. He has created me in preference to so many other creatures which He might have created, but which He never will create. He has heaped upon me so many graces, both general and special. He has cleansed me from my sins in His Blood and given Himself to me for my food. During His whole life He endured for me inexpressible sufferings of body and soul, and He remains day and night in the tabernacle, alone and forsaken, He, a *God,* for love of me, under the form of bread. He has led me to this most perfect Order and has called me to an especial great beatitude. Truly, all this, but more than all else the remembrance of the Blessed Sacrament, must inflame my whole heart with love. Superabundance of the love of my God! What am I that Thou shouldst so wonderfully love me? Ah! Thou knowest better than I what I am; all inconstancy, softness, self-love, etc., etc. But Thou art in Thyself the highest, most beautiful, most amiable Good, yes, the fountainhead of all beauty, purity, holiness; Thou dost contain in Thyself all that is good and adorable. Yes, O my God, from this moment I wish to belong entirely to Thee, as perfectly and un-

reservedly as it is possible with the help of Thy grace. My salvation demands it, Thou hast merited it.

On the day before her profession Sr. M. Veronica appeared in chapter in presence of the assembled community, and with great humility accused herself of all the exterior faults she had committed during her novitiate. The abbess then asked her if she still persevered in her resolution to consecrate herself to God by perpetual vows. She replied in the affirmative, and the abbess, according to the ordinance of holy Church, explained to her that, should she have concealed any obstacle to her profession, the community would hereafter be free to declare her profession null and void and would have the right to send her again out into the world. Hereupon Sr. M. Veronica made answer in the following simple but beautiful words: "Reverend Mother Abbess and holy community, I thank you for having received me for profession, unworthy though I am of so great a grace. I recommend myself to your prayers that my profession may be, as I desire with my whole heart, for the greater glory of God, the salvation of my soul, and for your joy and consolation." Mother Marie then admonished her never in any way to relax in her fervor, called her attention to the combats which perhaps awaited her, the artifices by which the devil might endeavor to cause in her disgust for the strife towards the perfection of her holy state, and how she must overcome all this with generous courage in order to attain her sublime destiny, the most intimate and inseparable union with Jesus Christ, the divine Spouse, who was calling her to the great happiness of celebrating on the morrow her espousals with Him. Then in accordance with a regulation of St. Colette,

she imposed upon the novice the same penance which Pope Benedict imposed upon this holy reformer when she, in his presence and in presence of many cardinals and dignitaries of the holy Church, vowed to observe the Rule of St. Clare. This penance consisted in reciting the seven penitential psalms, the Litany of All Saints and the Office of the Dead of nine lessons.

On the morning of the day so ardently longed for the bride appeared with a wreath of flowers upon her white veil. She was deeply recollected and glowing with interior devotion. The sisters asked her prayers for their different intentions, but otherwise no one dared to disturb her. This ceremony was quite different from that of the clothing, to which the outside world had been so freely admitted. Sr. M. Veronica did not this time leave the enclosure, but kneeling at the little open door of the grating through which the sisters receive Holy Communion, she placed her folded hands within those of the abbess, while the priest laid the stole over the hands of both, and thus pronounced the formula of the vows. Her ardent longing was fulfilled, she was united irrevocably to her Beloved by the most sacred promises, and nothing could now separate her from Him. With deep emotion she received from the hands of the priest the black veil and crown of thorns which the abbess placed upon her head. These were the symbols reminding her that henceforth she must be dead to the world and live only for her crucified Spouse. In joyous transport she exclaimed with St. Agnes: "I am espoused to Him Whom the angels serve, at Whose beauty sun and moon do marvel, to Him alone I preserve fidelity, to Him I consecrate myself with entire devotedness." To seal her covenant she had received her divine Savior

into her heart, and long after the ceremonies were ended she remained at His feet in fervent thanksgiving. Her soul was inundated with such happiness and peace that it seemed to her she could not tear herself away from before the altar. On this beautiful day she was left to follow undisturbedly the attractions of her heart, although the sisters would have liked to have her in their midst during the prolonged recreation allowed them. In the solitude of her cell she added the following lines to the resolutions of her retreat: "I will neither see, hear, know, think, speak nor desire anything but God. Away with all desires and fruits of self-love, away with all remembrances, away with everything—only God, my all. What will it avail me if, acting according to my own inclinations, I do greater things but fulfill not the demands of obedience? What difference does it make whether I do this or that, whether I be thought skillful or awkward, if only I fulfill the duties of obedience and please God? Of what use is all else to me if I displease Him? No, nothing, nothing but God and His good pleasure! From this moment I shall have no other aim but God. I will close my eyes, my ears, my tongue, my memory, my mind, my curiosity, my rebellious judgment, my heart to all but Thee, that with the eyes of my spirit I may see Thee only, hear Thee alone, think unceasingly, as far as is possible, of Thee, contemplate, love, seek, possess Thee alone—truly a sublime task surpassing human strength. O my God, help me; in Thee alone I can do all. I renew with my whole heart my holy vows which bind me eternally to Thee and I hope for everything from Thy grace. Amen. God, my last end, God, my all! Nothing, nothing but God! I will no longer be concerned about anything. Nothing concerns me, all is indifferent to

me. God alone! God alone! Death to self that God may live in me! O God inflame me entirely with Thy holy love, make me all Thine own. Amen. Holy Father, St. Francis, seraph of love and most perfect copy of our crucified Savior, make of me also a true copy of the poor, despised, crucified Jesus all filled with love for us; obtain for me Thy spirit, assist me in life and in death. Amen."

It seemed to Sr. M. Veronica as if with her profession a new epoch of life had begun for her. Although she continued without alteration to follow the order of the day and the routine of spiritual exercises, all now appeared to her in a new light. Her fears of being deprived of the holy habit had given place to a happy security and tranquility. She trusted that her divine Spouse who had united her to Himself in such a holy and inviolable bond, would also give her the grace to persevere to the end. The thought that her holy vows not only gave a double merit to all her actions, but also rendered them more pleasing to God, filled her with exceeding joy. She therefore redoubled her fervor and fidelity in the fulfillment of her daily duties, and particularly her conscientiousness in regard to all that obedience or any of the other vows required of her. Every day after Holy Communion she renewed her vows with great fervor. Not only her relations with God but also those with the community had become more intimate by her profession. Mother Marie of the Immaculate Conception had before the altar assumed the obligation of taking the place of a mother toward her, and her beloved sisters had declared themselves willing to keep her in their midst, therefore, she now looked upon herself as a true child of the community, and as she was zealous for the interests of God, so did she also take to heart the

welfare of her community as much as if it had concerned her own person or family. Willingly would she have made a complete sacrifice of herself through gratitude towards her mother and sisters, and to obtain any spiritual or temporal advantage for them. She endeavored to make up by fervent prayer and exemplary conduct for that which it was not in her power to do. She had an especial desire to see many fervent candidates enter the monastery, but God put her confidence to the test in this; for six years she remained the youngest member, but then all at once her patince was rewarded, in that quite a number of postulants having very good religious vocations applied.

Sr. M. Veronica's interior dispositions could not long remain hidden, and soon Mother Marie and other members of the community began to perceive the spiritual progress of the young nun. Immovable as a statue she knelt in choir and was so taken up with her devotions as to be hardly cognizant of what was going on around her. While going about the house engaged in her ordinary duties, it was noticed that she allowed no unnecessary glance, no useless word or sign to escape her, and that she seemed to be more occupied with God than with her work. After many years Mother Mary said on this subject, that, during her stay in the Dusseldorf community, Sr. Veronica's whole exterior had betrayed such indescribable recollection that it was easy to see she lead an interior life, absorbed in God. Nevertheless she was far from being melancholy or eccentric, but always took active part in the recreations, and was ever ready, as she had always been, to render little services to her sisters in whom she honored the spouses of Christ.

It was not long before an opportunity was offered her

of making more numerous sacrifices for the good of the community. To ground her well in humility Mother Marie appointed her assistant to the refectorian. So now, besides the many tasks which ordinarily fell to her lot as the youngest member, she was obliged to help in the refectory on Sundays and whenever her assistance was needed. This would not have added so greatly to her labors had it not been that the refectorian was a skillful water color artist and was kept busy most of the time painting little pictures to be given away as souvenirs. The bulk of her work, therefore, fell on her assistant. Sr. Veronica now had to care for all the bread and to see that none was wasted, a rather difficult and sometimes almost impossible task when we consider the many small and old pieces given as alms. To prevent its spoiling it often had to be dried in the oven, after the mould had been cut away. She had moreover to keep the refectory clean and in order, to set the tables for dinner, to cut the bread and give each sister her portion, and to attend to whatever was to be used as a drink at meals, which consisted either of wheat or rye coffee or of beer, just according to whichever had been donated. All these duties took up her time so completely that it was hardly possible for her to come punctually to the spiritual exercises, and this was for her the greatest of her sacrifices. Nevertheless she never complained and lost nothing of her former cheerfulness and patience, even her interior recollection did not suffer from these manifold exterior occupations. She had learned a maxim which she tried to put into practice: "The faster the work the more fervent should be our prayer during the same."

It would seem that in His infinite love and wisdom God

so ordered things, that exterior circumstances contributed to ground Sr. M. Veronica deeply in humility and self denial. Had she had the principal care of the refectory another sister would have been appointed to attend to the different little menial offices of the convent, by which postulants and novices are usually tried. But as she only took the place of the refectorian, although in reality doing all the work, she was not excused from her other little duties, but had to help as before to keep the laundry in order, to scrub the floors when necessary, to sweep the courtyard, etc. With all these occupations she paid so little attention to her own needs, that, notwithstanding her love of cleanliness, she many times could not find time on Saturday to sweep her cell. She considered it a great fault that, in her fruitless endeavors to do all that was required of her, the thought sometimes occurred to her that perhaps the refectorian would do better to help her instead of painting pictures, and that Mother Marie could just as well give away common little prints. Years afterward she still accused herself of this with great sorrow, as also of other little weaknesses. She declared that she had not lead a truly self-sacrificing life, but on the contrary had been full of faults and imperfections. She did not at that time suspect that all this was for her trial, and was to form her for the difficult task ahead of her. Mother Marie wisely entered into the designs of God, when she let those whom she considered capable of governing the community in after years, "serve from the pick upwards," as she expressed herself, and laid the foundations the deeper, the higher the edifice she expected to raise.

Those who understand not the higher ways of God, will

feel some surprise that Sr. M. Veronica could be happy engaged in occupations so little in harmony with her talents and education. But to those who in some degree have grasped the mystery of the hidden life of Jesus at Nazareth, it will appear as a natural consequence, that those whom He has called in a special manner to be His spouses, should esteem themselves happy to bear with their Beloved the burden of labor, humiliation and poverty. Almost all the saints who gave themselves particularly to prayer and contemplation, were led by God in this way to perfection and the most intimate union with Him. Witness the holy hermits and fathers of the desert, the first monks, and so many saints of these later times whose lives are well known to us. They knew from experience that arduous labors, painful to nature, advance the spirit far more than even those extraordinary works of penance which they practiced; humility and charity are promoted by them, while a secret vanity and contempt of others easily creeps into extraordinary works of penance. One day St. Theresa, glowing with divine love, not knowing what to do to please her divine Master, seized a brooom and began sweeping. She interrupted even the writing of her sublime works to assist, by spinning, one of the Communities founded by her. Of St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi it is related that she rose earlier than the other sisters to help with the work of the lay sisters, and that she did as much as four of these. Once in an ecstasy she appeared at the Communion table with the dough she had been kneading, in her hands. Magdalene Martinengo, Poor Clare Capuchine, beatified in 1900, daughter of Count Martinengo, did such hard and laborious work in her convent that in the evening when ascending the stairs she was obliged to support her-

self upon her hands in order to reach her cell. During many years of her religious life she was assistant to the cook. The great reformer of the Order of St. Clare, St. Colette, would not allow the sisters of the communities which she founded to be served by lay sisters, but ordained that the choir sisters should do all the work themselves. There were in her communities princesses and persons of the highest nobility who were obliged to assist at all the common work. After the example of the saints, Sr. M. Veronica's thirst for suffering could not be quenched by work and humiliations. Most willingly would she have added great works of penance, and begged permission to do so. This was, however, granted with wise moderation. She was once caught in the act of trying to efface from the floor the traces of a chastisement she had inflicted on herself.

But God knew other more efficacious means by which to purify His faithful spouse. As He had destined her to be a guide to many souls in the spiritual life, He wished, Himself, to form her in the school of the cross. The sweetness and consolations which she had hitherto enjoyed in prayer and spiritual exercises gradually gave way to a great dryness and aridity, and she was visited by doubts and anxieties of every kind. Various kinds of temptations stormed in upon her, and were so violent and persistent that she thought herself entirely forsaken and abandoned by God. She saw in her interior such a multitude of passions and evil inclinations, that she believed herself to be in a state of mortal sin, and felt that were she to be her own judge, she would have to condemn herself. This sense of her own utter unworthiness, which may be designated as one

of the greatest graces the mercy of God can bestow upon one, remained with her during her whole life.

In this time of desolation she found great help in the loving and firm direction of her spiritual mother, who consoled, encouraged, exhorted, corrected and punished her, as occasion demanded. Sister M. Veronica with childlike simplicity and candor and with perfect confidence, had recourse to her in all her needs, and received with equal gratitude her prudent severity and her considerate kindness and mildness. As Mother Marie was a great lover of prayer and recollection, and often amid her distracting employments felt the need of entering into herself, she had reserved a certain time during which she went into the garden to pray, and at this time no one was allowed to disturb her. To our poor Sr. M. Veronica this time often seemed much too long, and with a beating heart she would look out into the yard, in the hope of being perceived by the mother and encouraged to draw near. Sometimes she was successful, but often instead of the longed for consolation she received a severe rebuke. But in her heart Mother Marie compassionated her, for she knew by experience how heavy is the cross of these interior trials, which she called the crisis of the spiritual life. Almost all those who, in the Order of St. Clare, walk with fervor upon the way of perfection, must pass through this spiritual aridity and desolation with its temptations and combats, and this time is of such importance in the spiritual life, that superiors place little value upon the virtue of a religious who has not been tried in this crucible of interior suffering. Mother Marie was accustomed to say that only after a soul has been thus tried by God, can we judge whether she will walk upon the way of virtue and

fervor, or upon that of self-love and tepidity. The temptations which tried Sister M. Veronica most sorely were those which led her to judge the actions of her superior. She was troubled because for so long a time no novices entered the community and she thought the abbess was too strict in receiving applicants. Then again, it seemed to her that the sisters were too much burdened with work for externs and could not give themselves to prayer with the necessary tranquility. In short, all sorts of discontented thoughts arose within her, to which formerly she had been an utter stranger, and of which she afterward accused herself with great humility. Nevertheless, so great was her mastery over herself even during this time of trial, that Mother Marie was able to say of her that as long as Sister M. Veronica was her subject she had never seen her give way to a passion. As gold from the crucible, so Sister M. Veronica finally came forth from this most severe trial, purified and more fervent than before. She had now the actual experience that of herself and without the assistance of God, she was capable of nothing but sin. Moreover, she had become detached from sensible consolations and was ready to walk in the way of perfection, seeking God alone in truth, and His divine pleasure.

CHAPTER VI.

IN EXILE.

For sixteen years the community of Poor Clares at Dusseldorf had in peace and tranquility fulfilled its exalted mission, when the ominous culturkampf began. The May Laws of the year 1875 compelled most religious communities of Prussia, and among them the Poor Clares of Dusseldorf, either to disband, their members retiring again into private life, or to be banished from their country. The decree to this effect published by the civil authorities had to be read by the abbess in the refectory before the assembled community. We may imagine the astonishment of the sisters, who had concerned themselves but little about the politics of their country, and who like criminals were now to be driven from their native land. They looked at each other in amazement. They were informed that the Rt. Rev. Bishop was ready to dispense from the vows, that of chastity excepted, all those who were unwilling to leave their country. All preferred banishment. Sister M. Veronica, indeed, felt the heavy blow which reduced her beloved community to extreme misery, and compelled her to leave the monastery to which were associated so many precious memories, but she trusted, as did her sisters, that divine Providence would watch over them in their exile and would eventually lead them back again to their old home. Far from being tempted to abandon her vocation, she would rather have parted with her life than with her habit.

The news of banishment had not, however, come so unexpectedly to Mother Marie as it came to the other sisters. For a long time she had seen the clouds gathering, and had taken precautions lest the storm should suddenly burst upon them. On several occasions official documents had been sent her, one of which required her to give a copy of the Rules of the Order. She satisfied the officials by sending them a copy of the ceremonies to be observed in the choir and refectory. In the expectation that her community would soon share the lot of so many others, which had been banished from their country, she had begged the Very Rev. Fr. Othman Massman, who in the absence of the provincial, Very Rev. Father Gregory, governed the Franciscan province, to look for a fitting asylum for her community in Holland. The Reverend Father chose for them a little villa, "Tongerlo," near Lichtenvoorde, surrounded by water and in a secluded spot.

On October 29 and 30, 1875, the sisters left their beloved convent at Dusseldorf and began the journey to their new abode in Holland, accompanied by several secular ladies. sisters to some of the nuns. To avoid any demonstration they departed in secret, taking leave only of their confessor, the mother of one of the sisters who was a great friend and benefactress of the community, and of the Rev. Mother Francis Schervier, superior general of the Franciscan sisters, who was an intimate friend of Mother Marie.

Another difficulty now arose by which our Lord put the confidence of His servants to a severe test, for through an act which had been done out of love for Him and zeal for the spirit of their Rule, they came near to losing their monastery entirely. In order to practice perfectly that

MONASTERY OF POOR CLARES AT DUSSELDORF.

seraphic poverty which extends even to the non-possession of property by the community in general, the sisters had, with the approval of the emperor, given over in legal form to the diocese of Cologne, their monastery, the title of which had, until then, been held by a friend of the abbess, Baron von Furth. This had taken place in 1875 just before the culturkampf began, and had been noticed in the newspapers. The expenses, amounting to about a thousand thalers, had been defrayed by the father of one of the nuns. When the May Laws were enacted and the property of the archbishop became the property of the government, the sisters were advised to immediately revoke this formal transfer of their monastery to the archbishop. This they did notwithstanding the great expense they were again obliged to incur, but unfortunately it was done too late and not in the proper form. For this reason this latter act was contested by the secular commissary, and a lawsuit ensued. Efforts were made to save the monastery by prolonging the process in the hope that the church property would soon be in the hands of the archbishop again. Baron von Furth urged Mother Marie to come to an agreement with the commissary; she was at first unwilling to do this, but finally yielded at the advice of the archbishop. Thus for the present the monastery was lost; the commissary took possession of it for the diocese, but despite all his efforts he did not succeed in renting it for religious purposes. At last, during an interview with Mother Marie he consented to rent it to her at a very low rate, and the two extern sisters, who stayed there in secular dress to guard the Blessed Sacrament which was left in the chapel that the government might not be able to use the building for other purposes, were allowed to remain. In this

way, when ten years later Cologne again had an archbishop, the monastery was once more secured for the Poor Clares.

A strange feeling came over the sisters when, on arriving at their destination in Holland, they saw before them, instead of a monastery, a small castle. A private family could have conveniently lived there, but for a religious community space was entirely too limited. But, already prepared for trials, they were grateful to find at least security and a roof over their heads. They endeavored as far as possible to arrange everything according to their Rule, and to observe the enclosure. One room served as chapel and choir, a small room divided by a wooden partition was used as a parlor by day and a sleeping room by night. On the upper floor two large rooms were turned into dormitories, separated into cells by curtains. The abbess with a sick sister slept in another room. Shortly after their arrival several postulants entered. Mother Marie then had a space partitioned off in the attic where two sisters could sleep, but this, on account of the extreme heat of summer and cold of winter, and also because of the bats which had taken up their quarters there, was not a very agreeable sleeping room. Sister M. Josepha slept in the office of the abbess, and Sister M. Veronica in the sewing room. In this way they got along for two years. The extern sisters who had remained at Dusseldorf sent bread and other provisions, as they were not allowed to collect alms in the neighborhood of Tongerlo. Although the poverty was great and sometimes even the most necessary things were wanting, God's blessing visibly rested on the place; as sacrifices were multiplied, mutual esteem and charity were increased, and even the candidates so long desired by Sister M. Veronica, now presented them-

selves. Although she was no longer the youngest, she looked upon herself as the least and last of all. Most willingly did she endure the inconveniences caused by the increase in the community and the cramped quarters, and at recreation joked and laughed heartily at the many amusing incidents which resulted from these conditions. The chapel was much too small and some of the postulants and novices had to kneel close to the side of the altar steps with their faces turned towards the wall.

In spite of all inconveniences the Rule was most exactly observed, and in no point could human respect induce Mother Marie to deviate from it. How strict she was herein is shown by the following examples. According to the Rule of St. Clare the sisters are not allowed to receive visits from their relatives during lent and advent. It happened that a Jesuit missionary returning from America came to see his sister during lent, but Mother Marie would not let her speak to him; he had to content himself with giving her Holy Communion. Sister M. Veronica also received a visit at Tongerlo from her sister and friend, at one of the forbidden times. The two ladies had undertaken the long and tedious trip because a priest had told them that in their exile, the Poor Clares were not cloistered, and that, therefore, they could see Sister M. Veronica without grille or curtain.* What was their disappointment when Mother Marie would not even let them speak to her. Once, just before their departure, Sister M. Veronica was allowed to appear for a moment at the grille, without speaking.

The Rt. Rev. Bishop of Utrecht, in whose diocese the

* The Poor Clares speak to externs through a grille covered with a curtain.

Poor Clares lived during their exile, visited them at Tongerlo and showed them every kindness.

But, as the castle of Lichtenvoorde was altogether too small for the rapidly increasing community, the wealthy relatives of one of the sisters undertook to build a new Poor Clare's monastery near the study house of the Franciscan Fathers at Harreveld, Holland. Mother Marie had plans drawn up by a Franciscan brother, but when the Archbishop of Cologne, who was living in retirement in Holland, expressed his wish that a private house and not a monastery be built, because he wanted to keep the community for his diocese, the first plan was laid aside, and instead, the brother drew up a plan for a large private house adapting it to the needs of a religious community. The building was begun in 1876. When it was nearly completed, the sisters (still at Tongerlo) were, on a certain feast day, having their recreation out of doors; when suddenly so violent a storm came up that some of them narrowly escaped being blown into the water which surrounded the house. The next day Mother Marie told the sisters assembled in chapter that about noon of the preceding day a whirlwind had come upon their new convent at Harreveld, and in a few minutes had torn it down to its very foundations. She began with the words: "My dear sisters, our dear Lord has thought of us." This edified Sister M. Veronica very much, for she saw that her superior looked upon this great cross in their already difficult position, as a special grace from God and a sign of His predilection. But those who had begun the good work did not abandon it, and the building was erected anew within the same year.

Toward the end of this year a deep grief came to

Mother Marie in the death of her dearly beloved friend, Mother Francis Schervier. They had been acquainted before her entrance into religion, and a spiritual friendship had existed between them ever since. At the express wish of the archbishop Mother Marie had been accustomed to speak with Mother Francis at the open grille and without auditors. When the Poor Clares went into exile Mother Francis said that as long as she and her community had anything to live on, the daughters of St. Clare would also be provided for. When, after a short illness, this saintly superior died on December 13, 1876, Mother Marie's sorrow was so great, that through sympathy for her the whole community mourned as if they had lost their own mother. Sister M. Veronica ever highly honored the memory of this holy religious, and for many years kept her photograph on her writing desk in the convent at Cleveland.

On June 28, 1877, a few months before leaving Tongerlo for Harreveld, the community celebrated the silver jubilee of Mother Marie's entrance into the Order. It was, as Sister M. Veronica expressed it, "A day of emotion and rejoicing." Perhaps she had a presentiment of the great sacrifices which were soon to be demanded of them.

CHAPTER VII.

FOUNDATION OF THE MONASTERY OF POOR CLARES AT CLEVELAND, OHIO.

In 1876 the Very Rev. Fr. Provincial Gregory Janknecht, O. F. M., made a trip to America to visit the houses of his Order. In the plans of divine Providence this voyage was to be of the greatest importance for the Poor Clares. Before his departure, the Father, who took a deep interest in the Order of St. Clare, had said that with the help of God he would try to make arrangements for a foundation of that Order in the new world. A year went by and nothing more was heard regarding the promise. But on October 25, 1877, Mother Marie received a letter informing her that, trusting in Divine Providence, he had purchased, at the price of $7,300, a villa near Cleveland, Ohio, for a new colony of the Dusseldorf community of Poor Clares. The place was already arranged for a beginning, the chapel had been dedicated under the title "Sancta Maria Angelorum," and on the feast of St. Lawrence, August 10, the first Mass had been celebrated there. Two Poor Clares from Rome were awaiting their German sisters. They were the Countesses Bentivoglio, sisters, having the religious names Sr. Mary Magdalene of the Sacred Heart and Sr. Mary Constance of Jesus, and belonged to the monastery of San Lorenzo in Panisperna at Rome. The Most Rev. Fr. General of the Franciscan Order had recommended these two sisters to Fr. Gregory's care and he, that their spiritual needs might be

better attended to, had wished them to leave New Orleans where they had been dwelling and come to Cleveland. This they did and had arranged the house as well as could be, to serve its purpose as a temporary dwelling place for the community.

On the day after receiving this letter Mother Marie appointed the Sisters for the new foundation—Sr. M. Josepha, Sr. M. Hyacinth, Sr. M. Theresa, Sr. M. Veronica, who had now been in the community for eight years and was the youngest of the company. To these choir sisters was added the extern Sister Margaret Mary.

Shortly after this the community removed from Tongerlo to Harreveld in Holland; on Nov. 12 Mother Marie started with a few Sisters, the others followed later. Nov. 23 was the day set for the departure of the little colony for America. To form any idea of the greatness of the sacrifice demanded of these sisters we must remember that they were leaving not only their country and their families, but also the religious community in which they had found a second home. In Sr. Veronica's case we must also remember that she lost not only a loving mother, but an experienced and energetic guide, of whom she more than the others stood in need, on account of her timorous conscience. Nevertheless, she as well as the others voluntarily made this sacrifice. They even felt a holy joy in being chosen to undertake a work which they might hope would contribute so largely to the glory of God and the salvation of souls, and, although obliged to leave all they loved in this world, He Who was their all would be with them everywhere, and Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, their greatest treasure, would be found beyond the Atlantic.

To lighten the pain of departure Mother Marie accompanied them to Rotterdam on the appointed day. Arriving here at five o'clock in the afternoon, they were met by the syndic of the community—the "spiritual father," so-called—who had hired carriages to take them to the boat. They went aboard ship, where they took supper and spent the night. Sr. Veronica had the pleasure of sharing the cabin with her Mother Abbess. In the morning the syndic drove them to a neighboring church, where they heard Mass and received Holy Communion. The ship was scheduled to sail at noon. The last and hardest sacrifice had now to be made —they must part with their beloved mother. She would have liked to accompany them to their new home, but the traveling expenses were too great, and the voyage too dangerous for one in her delicate health. Not long after this she had so severe an illness that her life was despaired of, but God heard the fervent prayers of her children and restored her to health.

Divine Providence must have watched over our travelers and protected them amidst the dangers of the stormy sea. During the first night of their voyage more than thirty boats were wrecked off the coast of England.

The passage was a stormy one. Sr. M. Veronica was not very seasick, but all the others suffered so much that during the whole voyage they had to stay in bed. To add to the difficulties, accommodations were very unsatisfactory. They were fortunate in soon getting a family cabin in which were four beds and a sofa; here they could get more air and were better able to attend to each other. Never before in her religious life had Sr. M. Veronica had an opportunity of showing her skill in nursing the sick, but

she embraced the present one with her usual devotedness, entirely forgetting her own needs and difficulties. After a voyage of nineteen days the "Caland" landed at Hoboken, N. J., and for the first time the little community set foot on American soil. Two Franciscan Sisters, who came to meet them, helped them with their baggage and took them to their convent, where they were most cordially entertained. They then telegraphed to Fr. Provincial of the arrival of the Poor Clares. The Rev. Mother Provincial of the Franciscan Sisters made them a present of a large oil painting for their chapel, St. Francis surrounded by the wild animals of the forest.

What were the sentiments of their hearts when, on the following morning at an anniversary requiem Mass for the Ven. Mother Frances Schervier, they received for the first time in the new world the Bread of Angels, of which they had been deprived during the many days of their long and dangerous passage. A little later they started for Cleveland, where they arrived on Satruday, the octave of the Immaculate Conception, after an unbroken journey of twenty-three hours. Through the kindness of Rev. Fr. Provincial a carriage was waiting to take them to their monastery at 1116 Broadway. From a distance they saw the little belfry and the two tall poplars which stood on either side of the main entrance, but they did not know they had reached their new home until they read above the gate surmounted by a simple wooden cross, the words: "Convent of the Poor Sisters of St. Clare."

The Provincial and Guardian of the Franciscan Fathers were waiting for them at the gate. At the request of the former they walked in procession towards the house.

On the veranda they were heartily welcomed by the Rev. Mother Abbess M. Magdalene, Mother M. Constance and several postulants who took them to the little convent chapel, reciting the *Magnificat*. The two Mothers received their German sisters most kindly, waiting on them and attending to their needs with all possible solicitude. The Rev. Fathers honored the incipient community with their presence at dinner in the little parlor.

The Provincial, Rev. Fr. Gregory Janknecht, to whom the foundation owed its existence, wrote to Mother Marie that now, since it was happily accomplished, he felt amply rewarded for all the trouble and care it had cost them. Only after rendering Rt. Rev. Bishop Gilmour a great service by giving him the Rev. Fr. Irenaus Bierbaum as professor for St. Mary's Seminary, had he been able to obtain permission for a foundation of Poor Clares. After him the community owes to Rev. Fr. Kilian Schloesser an everlasting debt of gratitude; both devoted themselves to the work with much energy and self-sacrifice. They had taken care to prepare all the necessities for the establishment, workmen had been there and the brothers had helped. Straw ticks, articles of furniture, kitchen utensils and provisions were ready. Brother Ugolinus, the carpenter, had made the altar, two large sacristy cupboards and other valuable pieces of furniture.

The Very Rev. Fr. Provincial appointed Mother M. Magdalene Abbess, Mother M. Constance Vicaress and Sr. M. Veronica Mistress of Novices. A short time before the arrival of the German sisters, Fr. Provincial had advised the Italian sisters to adopt the Constitutions of St. Colette, it being his intention to establish a community of Poor

Clares of the reform of St. Colette. The sisters consented, laid aside the scapular which the Poor Clares of the reform do not wear on account of their stricter poverty, and put on the head-dresses of the Colettines. With the docility of a novice, good Mother Magdalene, who had a great love for strict observance of Rule, endeavored to learn all the customs of the Colettines. On the feast of Holy Innocents the three postulant received the holy habit according to the reform of St. Colette.

But difficulties soon arose. Although these sisters of such widely different nationalities lived together in peace and concord, still the relations on both sides were peculiar. With the exception of Sr. M. Veronica, who spoke French and English, the German sisters spoke only their mother tongue, while the Italian sisters could make themselves understood only in French and English; moreover, one of the Italian sisters in particular found difficulty in conforming to the Constitutions of St. Colette. Then, again, the climate was too severe for those born in a southern land, and taking it generally, they did not like Cleveland. So the Italian sisters addressed themselves to their ecclesiastical superior in Rome, the Most Rev. Fr. General of the Franciscan Order, laid their difficulties before him and asked him to decide the matter. He answered that they might return to New Orleans, where the Archbishop would willingly receive them again, since he had written them that he still looked upon them as *his* sisters.

It was decided to follow this advice. On February 27, 1878, the Italian sisters with their novices departed for New York, where business matters detained them for some time. In charity and friendship they parted, exchanging many a

little token of good will. Before leaving New York those on their way to New Orleans heard that yellow fever had broken out in that city. They therefore did not return, but accepted the offer of a wealthy and benevolent gentleman of Omaha, Neb., who built a monastery for them in that place. God in His wisdom must have ordered all in this way, for thus the Order of St. Clare became more widely spread.

Although under the above-mentioned circumstances a separation was desirable and even unavoidable, those who remained behind felt the loss painfully; particularly so Sr. M. Veronica, who entertained sentiments of highest esteem and true affection for Mother M. Magdalene, whose virtues had greatly edified her. She wrote of her, "Mother Magdalene has left edifying remembrances in our community by her love of poverty, her simplicity and unselfishness, and her patience and fortitude in enduring her ill health." That Mother Magdalene entertained similar sentiments towards her is proven by the fact that after she had definitely settled at Omaha, she wished to secure some German sisters for her community and Sr. Veronica tried to help her in this, but without success. With Mother Constance and one of the novices, who later became abbess of the community at New Orleans, a friendly correspondence was also kept up.

Mother Marie now appointed Sr. M. Veronica, abbess and mistress of novices, Sr. M. Josepha, vicaress, and the other offices were assigned to the two remaining choir sisters.

On February 7, 1878, Pope Pius IX died, and in her love and filial devotedness for Holy Church and her visible head, Mother M. Veronica penned the following lines to his

memory: "On Feb. 7 the beloved supreme Pastor of the Holy Church, Pius IX, Mastei Ferretti, entered into eternity to receive the crown of immortality. Scarcely to any Pope will a more fitting title have been given than was given him (Crux de Cruce), for his whole pontificate was one great cross and he died at the foot of the cross. Pius did not, as he had hoped, see the ardently desired triumph of the holy Church, but died a prisoner in his own house. By as much as he suffered and fought for the holy Church, so much the more heart-felt is the love with which the millions of his children look up to him. Despite his much agitated pontificate, like none of the two hundred and fifty-seven popes before him, he outnumbered the years of St. Peter. May the all-merciful God grant to His holy Church the consolation of seeing him among her canonized saints. O faithful shepherd of the flock of Christ, benign Pius, whose last words coming from his dying heart were: 'Protect the Church which I have loved so much! O intercede before the throne of God for this much oppressed Spouse of Christ, that the Lord may soon arise and command the storms and waves that there may again be calm. Exurge, Christe, adjuva nos et libera nos propter nomen tuum!'"

When she heard of the election of the new pope, she wrote: "On February 20, 1878, the joyous cry resounded, 'We have a new pope! A worthy successor of our great Pius in Cardinal Joachim Pecci as Leo XIII.' We have again, almost before the enemies of the holy Church thought of it, an *infallible head* in the Vicar of Christ. The protection of God over His holy Church cannot but be recognized in this speedy and happy election of a new pope."

CHAPTER VIII.

DIFFICULTIES.

While Mother M. Veronica, in noble forgetfulness of self, mourned and rejoiced with the holy Church, the divine Spouse had prepared for her a bitter chalice, which after the departure of the Italian sisters she was to drink to the dregs. To the exterior isolation which she felt in consequence of the loss of these beloved sisters, was added a terrible interior aridity and desolation, so that she seemed to herself as in the midst of a desert, entirely forsaken and surrounded by dangers. Later, when looking back, it seemed to her that she had never suffered so much in her life as at that time. To find herself, a member of a contemplative, strictly cloistered Order, in a strange land, in greatest poverty and in a responsible position, as the only one of her community who, having some knowledge of the language of the country, could carry on intercourse with outsiders, without extern sisters to collect alms or even to make the necessary purchases, this alone would have been a severe trial for the most courageous soul, but at the same time to feel herself forsaken by God, in Whom she placed all her hope, in Whom she had found all her consolation and joy, this was more than weak nature could bear. She sighed and wept bitterly, and, as is usual with humble souls, believed this to be a punishment for her sins. At the same time she believed herself to be the cause of the division of the community. "How could those good sisters," she wrote,

"receive instructions concerning the Constitutions of St. Colette from so young and imperfect religious as I am? Had an older and more capable sister been in my place they certainly would have stayed." But with her naturally cheerful disposition, Mother Veronica could not long remain submerged in this ocean of sadness; with an act of heroic resignation to the divine will, she roused herself and devoted herself as well as she was able to the interests of her little foundation.

Had Mother Veronica been less zealous for the strict observance of the Rule and particularly of enclosure to which the Poor Clares are bound by a special vow, she might readily have found help and relief in her great need. The Rt. Rev. Bishop would willingly have given his consent, that in cases of necessity the choir religious go out and collect alms, but the sisters would have suffered the most extreme want rather than not observe their Rule. God rewarded this fidelity and always sent them help when need was greatest, although He long continued to try the little community. A good family in the neighborhood named Buettner helped them out of many an embarrassment. When the extern sister had to go on errands, one of the children would come over and open the door to visitors and show them to the parlor grate during her absence. Sometimes they accompanied her on her errands and acted as interpreters. Of course there were all kinds of little troubles in connection with this, because the children were too young. Often when the little girls were at school and only the little boy was left to go with her, the sister would have to hold him by the sleeve to keep him from leaving her and joining his playmates in the street.

On February 28 the Rt. Rev. Bishop Richard Gilmour honored the Poor Clares with his first visit. Although at first displeased because of the departure of the Italian sisters, he soon showed that he felt very kindly toward the little community remaining. He allowed them to collect alms in the city, but would not allow them to open their chapel to outsiders on Sundays, lest the people should be drawn away from their parish church. Soon after this came the carnival days and during them the Forty Hours' Devotion was held for the first time in the little convent. Filled with the desire so essential to their holy vocation, of making reparation to the Sacred Heart for all the outrages which are committed against It during these days, the sisters forgot their sufferings and cares, and our divine Savior rewarded them with that peace which is a foretaste of the heavenly beatitude. At the Feet of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament Mother M. Veronica also found consolation and strength to bear courageously her heavy cross.

For a long time no postulants applied, partly because the sisters lived in such quiet and seclusion that few persons ever heard of them, and partly because it was believed that the life was too hard for human strength, that they might indeed be admired but never imitated. So Mother Veronica was obliged to beg her former abbess at Harreveld for help. This request was readily granted and on November 2, 1878, two sisters, who had been sent, arrived safely at Cleveland and were most gratefully and joyfully welcomed. One was a choir sister, the other destined for the exterior service of the monastery. Shortly before this an American postulant had entered who spoke only English. She received instructions in German from one of the choir sisters, to whom she

in return gave lessons in English. The community would now have been better able to get along had it not been that too much was expected of the sisters as soon as their number had increased. From different sides work was brought to them which they could not very well refuse, and which obliged them to give up a part of their already short night's rest. Time was hardly left for their most necessary spiritual exercises, a thing very hard for Mother Veronica, who so highly valued and dearly loved prayer. With the extern sisters, ignorance of the English language often caused great difficulties and many unpleasantnesses. Indeed these poor sisters had much to suffer, particularly when they went on errands. They were not understood and could not understand others, and what they heard from their own coun-ery people was usually not calculated to raise their courage. When they asked for alms they were not only gruffly refused, but often reproached and insulted. They were asked why they did not stay in Europe and told that there were already enough sisters in Cleveland who went begging. Since it was believed that they, as well as the choir sisters, were obliged to fast, no refreshment was offered them, although they might have been ever so far from home at dinner time, and they were too timid to ask for it. Sometimes they lost their way and stood helpless in the street, where they were laughed at by the passersby, who did not understand their questions; some eyed them suspiciously as if they were imposters, especially if one had been obliged to go out alone. In winter time these errands were particularly disagreeable, for many of the streets were almost impassible and it not infrequently happened that the sisters came home in the evening drenched to the skin, with their

shoes and stockings soaked with water; sometimes these were frozen to their feet and had to be thawed out before they could be removed.

At length, in April, 1879, a postulant who could speak English entered among the extern sisters. This was a great boon, although for a long time they had to put up with many inconveniences. On account of the great poverty of the community they were often compelled to beg for vegetables and other necessities at distant places; as this ordinarily happened when the roads were bad and the weather unpleasant, we may imagine these expeditions were anything but agreeable. Moreover, it frequently happened that people would have nothing to do with them, refusing them any help, and they were obliged to go fruitlessly from place to place.

It may seem to the reader that the sisters, under such difficulties, would at last have lost courage and have become unhappy in following their vocation; but just the contrary was the case, the greater the sacrifices they had to make, the happier they felt, and, next to God, the source of their great contentment, was the kindness of their mother. The sisters themselves said she made the quiet convent a real heaven to them, and that the mere thought of it sweetened the greatest sacrifices. When, as frequently happened, for want of good connections they had been unable to get a street car and came home late, Mother Veronica would herself take care of their supper, bring them dry shoes and stockings and serve them as a second St. Clare. With her own hands she knitted leggings to protect them from the cold. When they returned home she would first greet them with the customary salutation, "Praised be Jesus Christ!"

then she would say in a most compassionate tone, "Children, I suppose you are very tired," after which in her pleasant way she would give them a beautiful little instruction, telling them how they could make every step, every movement, meritorious for heaven. In these ways she made use of every opportunity to care for the spiritual and corporal welfare of her beloved children, and they often said to each other that the love of a natural mother for her children could not be greater or more tender than was that of Mother Veronica for her subjects. "When I entered the convent," says an extern sister, "I felt the sanctity and holy love of our good mother to such a degree that I often said, 'If only I could tell all the young girls in the world how happy one can be with the Poor Clares!' I do not think that any sister would have hesitated to go through fire for our dear Mother M. Veronica." As long as the community was small she helped at the ordinary housework, washing, scrubbing, etc., choosing for herself whatever was most unpleasant. Often, when in very cold weather she helped to hang out clothes, her bare hands and feet would be almost frozen, but she would never give up until the work was finished, and would say to those who wanted to take it away from her, "Oh, I don't mind the cold at all." We may well imagine that her example urged the sisters on to an ever increasing love of sacrifice.

In January, 1879, God sent the little community an alms which was indeed a great and much needed help. One of the Poor Clares at Harreveld induced her relatives (the family Kurten of Cologne) to send them four thousand thalers (about $3,000). Mother Veronica, who referred all to God, cried out joyfully when she heard this news, "May

the all-merciful God be praised a thousand times!" Full of gratitude towards all benefactors, she wished the names of the greatest never to be forgotten, with this end in view she wrote them in a little book which she kept for the purpose, and which has been continued by her successors up to the present day. For these benefactors particular prayers are said daily.

The Very Rev. Fr. Provincial Janknecht, O. F. M., having come to America only in quality of visitor, had returned to Europe in May, 1878. In the following year, on the feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel, the American monasteries of the German Franciscan Fathers of the province of the Holy Cross were united to form a new province under the title of the "Sacred Heart of Jesus," and Rev. Fr. Vincent Halbfars, guardian of the monastery at St. Louis, Mo., was appointed the first provincial. In June of the same year the Poor Clares became acquainted with the new provincial, who, like his predecessor, had for them the heart of a true father. An agreement was made between Rt. Rev. Bishop Gilmour and the provincial, that the bishop or his delegate should preside at the ceremonies of profession and clothing, while the provincial or another experienced Franciscan should make the canonical visitation.

In these difficult times at the beginning of the new foundation, Mother M. Veronica found great support in the direction of two most excellent and pious confessors, Rev. Fr. Eustace Niemuller, O. F. M., and Rev. Fr. Eustace Bruggemann, O. F. M., who successively were appointed confessors of the community. Mother M. Veronica placed great confidence in them, and asked their advice in temporal as well as spiritual matters. It was owing to their

firm yet mild direction, that she was able to fulfil with tranquility and peace of soul, in the midst of so much suffering, the manifold duties of her responsible office, and to serve God with loving confidence. The grace of the Holy Spirit so filled her heart that it seemed to overflow upon all who came in contact with her.

Rev. Fr. Kilian, O. F. M., pastor of St. Joseph's Church, who was looked upon as the superior of the Poor Clares, continued indefatigably to care for their temporal welfare. He endeavored to procure for the sisters, whose number was increasing, a larger and more comfortable building. The little house in which they were living could not be arranged according to the Rule of St. Clare and the Constitutions of St. Colette in regard to enclosure, and although this was on the whole pretty strictly observed, in lesser points it was not possible. For instance, visitors could see the choir sisters when they were working in the garden, and curious persons might, if they had a mind, even come around and look in the windows. This was in fact tried several times, and once a person who had seen a dish of pickled herring, jokingly remarked that the Poor Clares lived on herring tails, which greatly amused Mother M. Veronica.

Moreover, the house was poorly built and ill-fitted for a community of nuns who in winter lived most of the time in unheated rooms. The cold north wind blew mercilessly through the cracks and crevices in the walls and around the windows. The kitchen, where in the morning the cooking was done, was changed into an ice house in the afternoon, the walls of which glistened as though encrusted with diamonds. Outside, on the veranda, the lamps were kept and

cleaned, for want of a more suitable place. Here the sister who had charge of them, washed the chimneys in a basin covered with a crust of ice, while her hands were stiff with cold. A postulant had her ears frozen so badly that the skin peeled off. But most of all did the sisters suffer on account of their bare feet, cuts which seemed to go to the very bone, like those from a hatchet formed on the harder parts, while the softer parts were so chapped and covered with blood that the natural color of the skin could scarcely be discerned, and at the same time the heavy woolen habit rubbed mercilessly over the sore skin at every step. The distance of the coal and wood shed from the house, and the length of time which had to be spent trying to coax a little water out of the old pump, greatly augmented the difficulties. That they might not leave tracks of blood on the floor the sisters made little caps of straw for their sore heels, and in case of necessity only was the foot bandaged. In spite of her compassionate heart, Mother M. Veronica nevertheless rejoiced when she saw her sisters courageously and joyfully bearing the suffering entailed by the observance of their Rule. And should those whose vocation it is to offer themselves to God as victims for the interests of the holy Church and the welfare of the human race, fear pain and privations? With her face beaming with joy, Mother M. Veronica said one morning to the novices and postulants who were shivering with cold, "Now is our harvest time. The greater the cold outside, the stronger must love glow within." She then suggested to the young sisters, intentions for which they might offer to God the sacrifices and sufferings of the coming day. She so well understood the art of inspiring others, that far from complaining of the rigors of their Rule, they thought

they had too little opportunity of suffering for their divine Master.

In summer also were the inconveniences arising from the cramped quarters felt. This was especially the case, when during the year 1881, the community received an increase of four new postulants. As Mother M. Veronica could not refuse anyone who possessed the necessary qualifications and manifested an ardent desire to become a Poor Clare, she was ingenuous in finding little corners where still another one could be stowed away. Two novices slept in a narrow hallway on the second floor, leaving barely room enough to pass. In the novitiate, a small room, two postulants were lodged, while one-half of the room was left free to be used for the exercises of the novitiate and as a work-room. Four sisters slept in another small room, and the abbess's little office room was changed at night into a sleeping apartment for herself and assistant. In the choir the sisters stood so near together while reciting the divine Office, that they could not turn the leaves of their large breviaries without pushing against each other. When kneeling, the discomfort was still greater. One novice found a place pressed between a cupboard and the wall. As the windows were at the back of the room and no draught could be made, the atmosphere was really stifling. It is not to be wondered at, that by such means as these, the great trial which was soon to come upon the community was prepared.

CHAPTER IX.

CROSS UPON CROSS.

After his first visitation of the monastery, the Very Rev. Fr. Provincial Vincent, O. F. M., charged Fr. Kilian to look for a suitable house or building lot. In the kindness of his heart he went so far as to go with him to look at a house, which, as it seemed suitable for the purpose, was at his advice immediately purchased. This was on December 1, 1880. The price was $10,500, of which $2,500 had to be paid immediately, the rest remained at 6% interest and was to be paid in rates of $2,000 annually. Although this was said to be a low price, it was a great sum for the poverty of the community. But Mother Veronica trusted in God and His great treasurer, St. Joseph. The old house which had been purchased could not be used just as it was, a new wing had to be built to obtain the necessary conventual apartments, and to arrange for the observance of enclosure. As soon as the building was vacated this work was begun. Mr. Cudel, the architect, drew up the plans gratis, and Mr. Heckmann, the contractor, directed the work, expecting his reward from God alone. Most of all, however, are the sisters indebted to Rev. Father Kilian, who watched over the work day after day, and took care to procure the necessary funds, even, with permission of the definitor, paying the interest for the sisters, as long as he was guardian of the Franciscan monastery (1882-1885). He also saw to clearing the place on Broadway from debt, that they might be

better able to sell it, the Franciscan fathers loaning the amount necessary for this purpose ($2,000) without asking interest. Brother Ludovic obtained permission to assist Mr. Heckmann in superintending the work, and had in it so charitable an interest, that for several months he himself, in secular clothing, took part in it.

On April 8, 1881, the first canonical election was held at the monastery of Poor Clares, the Very Rev. Father Provincial Vincent, O. F. M., presiding. The abbess, Mother M. Veronica, and all the officials whom Mother Marie had at the first appointed, were re-elected.

In June of the same year an election was held at the convent of Harreveld, at which Mother Marie, having most urgently requested it, was relieved of her office, and the former mistress of novices, Sr. M. Johanna, was elected abbess, while the care of the novitiate was entrusted to Mother Marie. The new abbess, as a token of the unchanged sisterly relations between the two communities, sent to the community at Cleveland the sum of 4,000 marks, which, coming so opportunely at the time of building, gave them indeed a glad surprise.

On the last day of August the cross was placed on the little tower of the new convent on Perry street. Every one rejoiced at the anticipated removal. It was very inconvenient for the priest to have to drive the great distance to the convent on Broadway so early every morning to read Mass there; sometimes the driver overslept and had to be awakened when the priest was ready to start. The sisters were happy in the thought of the larger house which would enable them to observe their Rule more perfectly—little did

they suspect that two of their number would never set foot within its doors.

Before the new monastery was completed, God visited the community with an epidemic of typhoid fever. A postuland, Miss Catherine Reis, was the first victim. When, some time before, this young lady had heard that the sisters would not receive any new postulants until after the removal to Perry street, she had presented herself, and had entreated so earnestly that her reception be not delayed, that Mother M. Veronica finally yielded. "God calls me," she said, "and I must obey. If you can but give me a little corner under the stairs, I will be satisfied." All who knew her before entering the convent, testified to her piety and exemplary conduct. Every morning she heard Mass at St. Joseph's Church, and received Holy Communion several times during the week with great fervor and devotion. Each evening found her again in the church to visit the Blessed Sacrament. Her fervor in prayer was so great that unconsciously she gave vent to it in loud sighs, which were often a source of much edification. From her deportment, always modest and recollected, it was evident that her daily occupations, those of a seamstress, did not interrupt her intercourse with God, and her love of silence, as well as the holiness of her conversation, showed that, dead to the world, she lived for God alone. On Sundays she spent almost the whole day in church. She was frequently seen making the Way of the Cross, remaining sometimes half an hour before the same station, entirely absorbed in the subject of her meditation, and oblivious to all that went on around her. Never was an uncharitable word heard from her lips, and when, sometimes, unkind remarks of others

were made in her presence, she was sure to have a word of defense ready. She was received on the feast of St. Anne and lived in the convent for the space of but two months, edifying all and beloved by all. She was as innocent and simple as a little child, meek and gentle as a lamb, modest and unassuming in her whole conduct, kind and charitable towards others and entirely forgetful of self. She was ever ready to do what was asked of her, and even without being asked, her charity anticipated the wishes of others. Even in the last days before her final illness, although feeling quite weak and exhausted, she still continued to draw water from the old pump, which needed so many drinks and so much assistance to induce it to give up a little water.

On Sunday, October 2, when the signal was given to ring the bell for Mass, she went as usual to perform this duty, declining the offer of another postulant who wished to do it for her. All at once a heavy thud was heard. Catherine had fainted and had to be led back to the choir. Although she soon regained consciousness, it was evident that she was very ill. After Mass she was taken to the novitiate, now converted into an infirmary. Her illness made rapid progress and the doctor declared that she had typhoid fever in an advanced stage. Mother Veronica's grief was inexpressible as all hope of saving the life of the fervent postulant vanished. She edified all by her serene and joyous patience, and the humility with which she begged for anything she needed. "I humbly beg, if I may have it," were her words.

She had an ardent longing for Holy Communion and to be united to God in heaven. So intense was this desire that she feared she might offend God by wishing for death;

and several times it was necessary to set her right on this point. It was touching to hear her pray: "O Jesus, O come thou sweet Spouse of my soul; I long for Thee! O Mary, come and take me with thee!" When Mother M. Veronica told her that all the sisters were praying for her recovery, she said: "No, they should not pray for that, but that He may take me to Himself, if it be His holy will." She was so detached from all earthly ties that she rarely spoke of her mother or other relatives, whom, nevertheless, she loved most tenderly.

So great was her esteem for holy obedience, that even in her wildest ravings the words: "Catherine, be obedient," were sufficient to recall her to consciousness, and she would then say: "Oh! pardon me for being so disobedient."

After having received the holy Viaticum, she prayed aloud with most touching fervor the beautiful prayer: "Soul of Christ, sanctify me," to the end. Then she tranquilly made arrangements for her funeral. "Let no one but the sisters touch me," she said; "the Poor Clares shall bury me." She desired to have a little crucifix and some rosary beads placed in her coffin, and, during the funeral service, her First Communion candle was to stand lighted on the coffin. The night preceding her death she prayed aloud a great deal and once began to sing a hymn. At two o'clock in the morning the postulant who was watching at her bedside called Mother M. Veronica, for her agony had begun. All the sisters were summoned and the prayers for the dying were said. To her last breath Mother M. Veronica repeated to her the most fervent and touching aspirations, and as soon as she had expired gently closed her eyes, while shedding many tears. Great as was her sorrow, she, never-

theless, said immediately, full of resignation: "God gave her to us, God has taken her from us. May His holy Name be praised!" It was about four o'clock in the morning of October 19, 1881, when Catherine died. All her wishes were carried out. Her funeral took place the next day.

On October 7, Sr. M. Theresa fell ill. She was to be the second victim of the dread disease. This good sister entered the convent at Dusseldorf at the age of seventeen, and received the holy habit October 22, 1868. During her novitiate she longed unceasingly for the happy moment when she might give herself irrevocably to God by her religious profession. This happiness was granted her on October 26 of the following year. As she was very strong and of robust constitution, she had the privilege of observing, during her whole religious life, the holy Rule in all its rigor, and of being permitted to perform the most laborious work for the community. In this she was quite indefatigable. In the Cleveland convent she had charge of the kitchen, was also second portress within the enclosure, and besides doing all the work of these two charges, found time to care for the garden and to help at washing, sewing and knitting. She never lost a moment's time, and her greatest happiness was to relieve others of their work; yet all this she did quietly and unostentatiously, wishing to have God alone for witness of her acts of charity.

Sr. M. Theresa was a most pure and innocent soul. An indescribable virginal purity and modesty was diffused over her whole exterior. She loved silence, solitude and recollection, and spoke very little. In the morning she was always first in the choir, and had a remarkable love for the

Divine Office. Although as cook, she was dispensed from being present at Sext and None, she, nevertheless, managed to finish her work, without manifesting any undue haste, sufficiently early to be able to assist at all the canonical hours with the community. After her death a leaf written by her, and containing the following resolutions, was found:

"After Mass I will endeavor to keep myself in the presence of God as much as possible.

"I will make my meditation as well as I can, and will always make some definite resolutions against my predominant passion.

"I will endeavor to recite the Divine Office, 1st distinctly, 2nd attentively, 3rd with a pure intention.

"Whenever I go to confession, I will consider my confessor as though I beheld in him Jesus Christ Himself, in order to guard myself against any attachment.

"I will look upon my superiors as though I beheld God in them, and I will submit my judgment to theirs.

"Whenever I feel somewhat unduly excited, I will refrain from speaking for a few moments and not yield to the first impulse.

"Every day I will impose upon myself a certain number of mortifications."

These resolutions will give a glimpse of her interior life, and of her recollection during her many distracting duties. She was a model of punctuality. Her work was always done at the right time and often before. Sometimes Mother Veronica would ask her if she had time to do a certain piece of work which must be done, or would she better ask someone else? The sister would always answer

that she could do it, and often it was found that, divining the wishes of her superior, she had done it already.

Death claimed this sister very suddenly and unexpectedly, although during the summer of 1881, as though she had a presentiment of it, she was several times heard to say with a peculiar smile, "Yes, let us be prepared for death. Our Lord does not say: Prepare for death, but: *Be* prepared!" At first the physician who was summoned, made little of her illness, merely telling her to keep quiet and lie down if she felt the need of rest; but seeing her again on the evening of the same day, he made her go to bed. October 15 she made her last confession and received Extreme Unction.

Meanwhile the disease continued to spread. On October 10 Sister M. Hyacintha, another support of the community, who had nursed Catherine with self-sacrificing devotion, was taken sick, and a few days later one of the younger professed sisters also showed symptoms of the fever. It seemed as though the little community, consisting at that time of six professed sisters, three of whom were sick, two novices, a postulant and three extern sisters, was destined to die out. To make more room for the others, and to prevent further contagion, some of the sisters slept on the floor in the refectory, removing their bedding every morning, that the room might be used for meals. All were much exhausted from watching, anxiety and the added work which the care of the sick made necessary, and it was to be expected that they, too, would soon succumb. In this dire distress Father Kilian was a real father to them. It was now deemed necessary to separate the sick from the well, but as the new monastery was not yet ready for occu-

pancy, Father Kilian tried to find a place in some other convent where the sisters not yet attacked by the disease could be lodged for a time. Two religious communities offered an asylum to the Poor Clares in this great need, the sisters of the Good Shepherd and the Ursulines. Father Kilian accepted the offer of the latter as they had more room. They gave for the use of the Poor Clares a very large apartment, having an entrance from the street, and another smaller room adjoining it. The Ursuline community was at that time governed by the Venerable Mother M. Austin, and Rev. Fr. Kilian was the ecclesiastical superior.

On October 15, a stormy, rainy evening, the sisters took leave of each other and Mother M. Josepha, vicaress, with a young professed sister, the two novices and the postulant went to the Ursuline convent, leaving Mother M. Veronica and the extern sisters behind to care for the sick. We may imagine how hard, under the existing circumstances, this brief separation must have been for those who were going as well as for those who remained, as no one knew what victims the treacherous disease might claim next, and whether or not they should ever meet again. Most of all did they fear for their beloved mother, who, with her usual devotedness, gave herself up entirely to the care of her spiritual children.

Mother M. Josepha and her companions were received with the utmost charity and compassion by the Rev. Mother and some of the oldest sisters at the Ursuline convent. That they might as far as possible observe the enclosure, they had resolved never to leave the rooms assigned them. An altar was placed in the larger room at which a priest said Mass four times a week. In the morning each sister

carried the cot bed on which she had slept during the night into the adjoining smaller room, while the large room served for a chapel. An Ursuline sister answered the priest at Mass. After thanksgiving all that had been used for Mass was removed and the sisters recited the Divine Office and their other prayers in this same room. They were dispensed from fasting, but observed their Rule closely in all other points, excepting the midnight Office. On the Sunday after their arrival the sisters received a visit from the Rt. Rev. Bishop and his vicar general, who showed them much sympathy. Later the sisters were allowed to assist at Mass in the Ursuline chapel. During the time of their stay at this convent every mark of friendship was shown them; they were treated with the greatest kindness and received abundantly all that they needed, so that when the time for departure came, it was with heart-felt gratitude that they took leave of their benefactors.

But let us return to Mother M. Veronica and her charges. Father Kilian had sent to the community of Franciscan hospital sisters at Cincinnati, requesting the services of two of their number. The Venerable Mother Provincial M. Vincentia would have liked very much to come herself, but this she could not do. She therefore sent two other sisters, who arrived on the morning of October 17. These sisters shed tears of compassion when they saw the poverty of the Poor Clares. Everything necessary for the service and comfort of the sick was wanting; they were lying on their hard straw ticks and pillows, which are stuffed almost as hard as a board. Mattresses, feather pillows, etc., were unknown. Kitchen and cellar contained provisions for but a few days, and nothing at all of the kind of food neces-

sary for sick persons. Bedding and proper clothing were also wanting. When the Franciscan sisters informed their superior of the poverty they had found, she and her communities at New York and Cincinnati, filled with compassion, sent blankets, woolen underwear, flannels, towels, wine biscuits, altar linens, etc. The nurses even gave part of their own clothing to the sick. Nor would they allow the Poor Clares to pay their traveling expenses. If God looks down with complacency upon the works of charity performed by the rich and those who have abundance, how much more will He bless the poor, who out of their own poverty, assist others so generously.

Meanwhile, poor Sister M. Theresa was gradually growing worse, erysipelas having set in, in addition to the fever. Besides this, she had great sores on her back on account of lying in bed. Yet all this she bore most patiently and never complained. Only once, when one of the sisters asked her if she had any pain, she pointed to those sores. She never became delirious in spite of the high fever. Silent and peaceful as she had been in the days of health, she now lay in bed, seldom speaking and making her wants known in a few words.

She was a great lover of holy poverty, and did not like to use remedies she thought too expensive; she would not even take lemonade, saying it cost too much, she preferred rice or barley water, because the sisters who were well could also use this food. Neither the doctor nor the nurses fully realized her condition. Even during the last days of her illness she twice asked for some knitting; and on the morning of the day of her death one of the Franciscan sisters reported to the sisters staying at the Ursuline convent that

she was improving. But when, later in the day, the doctor returned, he noticed a change, and at once ordered a remedy which might have saved her life had it been given in time, but now it was too late. An extern sister quickly summoned one of the Fathers, who arrived just in time to recite the prayers for the dying. Quietly and peacefully as she had lived, she passed away on October 21, 1881.

The sad news was immediately brought to the Ursuline convent. The sisters were at dinner, and the words of the Holy Rule "When any sister of our monastery departs this life, the other sisters shall say fifty Pater nosters for her," were just being read; so they knelt down and said the Pater nosters.

Early that morning when saluted with the words, "Praised be Jesus Christ," she had answered, "For ever more." These were her last words. Some time later the salutation was repeated; her lips parted as if in a smile, but she could not speak. In the afternoon she was clothed for burial in the habit she had worn on the day of her profession in 1869, Mother Veronica arranged her veil and kerchief; in her hands she held her profession cross. She was buried October 22, the thirteenth anniversary of her clothing, and as the sisters had as yet no burial place of their own, she was interred in the Franciscan Father's cemetery.

On the day of the funeral, Father Kilian saw Mother M. Veronica and was so much alarmed at her pallor and the tired look she wore, that he feared, not without reason, that she might be the next victim of the dread disease, if she were not compelled to take some rest. He, therefore, in virtue of the authority granted him by the Very Reverend Father Provincial, ordered her and one of the extern sisters

to go and stay for some time at the Charity Hospital. As the two sisters who were now sick had but a moderate fever and were in no immediate danger of death, and as they had such excellent care, Mother M. Veronica consented to go, using the same carriage in which the extern sisters returned from Sister M. Theresa's funeral.

Hardly had she left the house when Sr. M. Hyacintha's illness took a serious turn; she received Extreme Unction on the following day. Although the Sisters of Charity did everything in their power to procure for Mother M. Veronica the comforts and relaxation so necessary for her, she could find no rest away from her children, and when she learned of Sister M. Hyacintha's alarming condition, she could be detained no longer, but returned home after having stayed but four days at the hospital. Sister M. Hyacintha's fever had reachd such a stage that there was little hope of saving her life; for a long time she lay between life and death; until finally, by the all wise and loving intervention of divine Providence, when the crisis was reached, she began gradually to improve. She had great confidence in our Lady of Lourdes and took some of the holy water every day, and to this devotion she ascribed her cure. The other sister who had the fever also began to grow better, and on November 12 both patients for the first time went to the choir and received Holy Communion. The great trial had reached its end.

The Franciscan sisters now felt that their services were no longer necessary, and that they must return to their hospital. On November 15 they took their departure, accompanied by the blessings and grateful prayers of their patients and their reverend mother and sisters. Two days later

Mother M. Josepha and her little company returned. Great, indeed, was the rejoicing after the trouble and suffering of the past weeks, to be reunited and to take up again the thread of their daily lives. Mother M. Veronica, in the annals of the monastery, gave expression to her feelings of gratitude towards God and her benefactors as follows: "God, the all-wise, the all-merciful, be thanked a thousand times for having had mercy upon us when His own good time came, and for having spared the little colony of Poor Clares. But thanks also to those, and may God abundantly reward them, whom He has made use of for its preservation; particularly to Father Kilian, the good Mother M. Vincentia and her sisters, the Ursulines and the sisters at the Charity Hospital on Perry street. God striketh and healeth again. He leadeth into the pit and leadeth forth again. May He be praised for all!"

The third of December was a feast day for the community—the clothing of the postulant who had entered shortly before the great affliction came upon them. She was given the name of the departed Sister M. Theresa. This was the last festival held in the old house, as the building on Perry street was almost completed.

After this period of trial the Poor Clares found by experience that all things work together unto good for those who love God. Not only did it tend to their purification and advancement in virtue, but also was for their temporal good. Through it they became better known, the sympathy of people was aroused, and they thus gained many benefactors. Through the kindness of the Franciscan sisters they received $800 from a gentleman of Cincinnati. A benefactor at Buffalo sent $100 to pay the funeral expenses of the

departed sister, besides sending provisions. The Catholic Knights of St. John gave a concert for the benefit of the Poor Clares, which brought a considerable sum, a collection was taken up in St. Joseph's Church, and good people from Cleveland and other places gave large donations for the building, so that the sisters were able to make the first payment.

CHAPTER X.

THE NEW MONASTERY.

The new monastery and chapel were to be dedicated on Christmas day, and December 23 had been appointed as the day on which the sisters were to take possession of their new home. Several men had offered their services gratis to help in the moving, and it was a busy time for all. Some of the sisters went to the new convent and began to clean there, while others remained until the following day to attend to the moving and to clean up the old house. This work lasted until evening, so that it was Christmas eve before they arrived at the new building. They found that those who had gone ahead of them had not been able to finish the cleaning, shavings, mortar and lime were lying about everywhere. All who were able to work had to lend a helping hand in sweeping and washing the floors. Mother M. Veronica was foremost in the work and would not let anyone take the mop-cloth away from her. Finally, at half-past eleven, just a half hour before the dawn of Christmas, the worst of the dirt was cleared away and the work was declared finished for the present. There was barely time to say Vespers and Compline before midnight. In the morning Rev. Fr. Kilian, accompanied by Rev. Fr. Bernardine, Brother Ugolinus and Brother Ludovic came to dedicate the chapel. After this ceremony came that of blessing the monastery; all went through in procession, Father Kilian at the head, reciting many prayers and psalms. After the dedication the first

Mass of Christmas was celebated in the chapel, followed by the second and third. The Blessed Sacrament was exposed for adoration and the sisters remained in the choir all day in praise, thanksgiving and fervent prayer.

The community had now the real conventual apartments and was able to observe the strict enclosure, but all the cells on the third floor were unoccupied, for the community, small to begin with, had lost two of its members by death. For a long time the virtues and last illnesses of these two formed the chief topic of conversation at the daily recreation. On one such occasion Mother M. Veronica said: "Had Sister Theresa and Catherine lived, they might have accumulated countless merits and have become great saints. Gad has spared our lives and gives us abundant graces every day, and if we employ them well they will lead us to the height of perfection. It is therefore still in our power to become saints." With such remarks she was accustomed to encourage her subjects to more and more faithful cooperation with grace, and to tend more zealously toward the end of their vocation.

Although the community had taken possession of its new home, the building was by no means entirely completed, carpenters, painters and other workmen were still employed in different parts of the house. This, as may readily be imagined, was very disturbing to the regular observance of religious life and, on account of the severe rules of enclosure which Mother Veronica wished to have faithfully observed, occasioned many inconveniences. The Rule of St. Clare prescribes that when workmen are engaged within the enclosure, the sisters should, as far as possible, avoid being seen by them. And also, that when it is necessary to speak

THE PERRY STREET CONVENT.

to them, two discreets or council members must be present. This it is very difficult to observe when the community is small. The sisters often had to go much out of their way to avoid meeting the workmen, while the other rule was the cause of much loss of time and often interrupted very necessary work. The young sisters of the noviciate interpreted the words "as far as possible" in their strictest sense, and thought themselves obliged to employ every means in their power to avoid being seen. They were like criminals, always ready to fly or to seek a hiding place. One could not have suppressed a smile to see here a head cautiously bent over the bannister spying if the road were clear, there a novice bounding up or down the stairs, another dashing with lightning speed through a corridor. Once a carpenter entered the novitiate quite unexpectedly. In the twinkling of an eye one novice had hidden behind the door, another behind the sewing machine, while a third suceeded in making her escape from the room. Mother M. Veronica, who entered with the workman and with one glance took in the whole scene, could not conceal her amusement, although she afterwards rebuked them for their childish behavior. Everyone heaved a sigh of relief when the last workman had left, and Mother M. Veronica had a Te Deum said in choir that at last all was finished and they could resume their peaceful mode of life.

St. Joseph on his feast day brought another postulant who was soon followed by a second. Both were clothed with the holy habit before the end of the year, and made their perpetual vows on February 22, 1884.

In order to draw some profit from the old building on Broadway, Rev. Fr. Kilian had it rented. Later it became

the cradle of a new colony of Franciscan sisters from Olpe, which was soon in a flourishing condition. As the house was not large enough, they built at first a frame hospital, but this has now been replaced by the large and handsome building known as St. Alexis Hospital.

Before the time of the visitation and election which was to take place on May 3, 1884, Mother M. Veronica wrote to Mother Marie, begging her to send a sister to Cleveland who could govern the community in her stead. Mother Marie answered that she could do this on condition that Mother Veronica would herself return to Harreveld to replace the sister whom she would send. But Mother Veronica, feeling that she knew the community and understood its different needs, could not see how it would be right for her to leave it. She therefore said no more about the matter and was again elected abbess, Mother M. Josepha remaining vicaress. As the novitiate had grown quite rapidly, Mother M. Veronica wished to be freed from the additional care which this imposed upon her, so she proposed one of the younger sisters as mistress of novices, who was accordingly elected.

In November, 1884, the silver jubilee of Mother M. Josepha's entrance into the Order was celebrated. This was a great and happy feast for the community, for all loved the good mother most sincerely. In the morning after Mass she was greeted with songs and addresses, and received many spiritual offerings as well as material gifts, among the latter some beautiful sacred vestments pleased her particularly, as she then held the office of sacristan as well as that of vicaress.

CHAPTER XI.

RELIGIOUS DISCIPLINE AND SPIRIT.

The community increased so rapidly that soon nearly all the cells within the enclosure as well as those belonging to the extern sisters were occupied. This naturally brought increased trouble and care to the good mother, and gave her opportunity to manifest more and more her love and devotedness towards her community. She endeavored in the fullest sense of the word to become "all to all." The spiritual welfare of her subjects claimed her first attention. At every hour of the day or night she was ready to console the afflicted, to counsel those in doubt, to encourage the pusillanimous, to assist those in temptation and to restore peace to every troubled heart. One whose difficulties caused her to have frequent recourse to her charity says of her: "Even now my heart often reproaches me when I remember how frequently I troubled our dear mother, and of how many precious hours, which she needed so much, I robbed her. Yet I never detected the least sign of impatience or displeasure in her, it seemed as if I were the only one she had to care for. In the first years of my religious life I was troubled with many and great temptations, particularly against God's mercy, but she always knew how to help me over them. When she did not succeed immediately in calming me, she would begin to weep, and embracing me would say: 'Dear sister, surely in addition to all the other sins and faults which you commit, you do not wish to offer this out-

rage to our divine Savior, of despairing of His Mercy!' This she repeated so frequently and it made so great an impression on me that I still imagine I hear the same words, when this temptation assails me. Often she repeated to me that she was ready at any time of the day or night, and that she would shirk no sacrifice to contribute to restoring peace to a troubled heart, and to help it to serve God with joyous courage. This she proved by deed, for she often came to my bedside at night to see if I were quiet, and if she found me awake she never left without rendering me some little act of charity."

Another sister says: "During my novitiate I was several times tempted to despair, day and night I was tormented by the thought that I must not remain in the convent, although my whole soul clung to the religious life. In reply to her compassionate inquiry if I were not well contented, I told her my great trouble, and even while I opened my heart I began to feel better. During the earnest and charitable admonition she then gave me, all fear and anxiety vanished, and I can never thank her enough for having thus saved my vocation."

Not to exceed the limits of this sketch we will not multiply examples, but all who were her subjects agree that she sacrificed hours and even half of the night to restore peace of heart to the afflicted, and that no one ever left her without feeling consoled. Many believe she shortened her life by her self-denying charity.

She showed herself no less loving towards those who suffered from bodily indisposition. With true maternal solicitude she inquired of the sisters at the different seasons of the year concerning their necessities. She was always

careful to procure sufficient warm clothing for those who suffered very much from the cold, and would go into the different cells to assure herself that they were well provided with bedding. Often did she supply a want which could not otherwise be immediately remedied, by depriving herself of the needed article. For fear that her children might take cold, she would go about the house on cool summer nights, closing the windows after all had gone to sleep. Of the sick was she most tenderly solicitous. She employed everything she could think of, for their comfort and relief, and trained the infirmarians to do the same. Instead of seeking her bed for her short night's rest after the work and fatigue of the day, she might often be seen, benumbed with cold and almost overcome by sleep, going softly from cell to cell, here giving a refreshing drink to a sick sister, there arranging the bed or pillow of another, again consoling and comforting a third; and all this she did with such winning sweetness that she was to her sisters the image of the Good Shepherd caring for His lambs.

Notwithstanding her kindness and moderation, she was far from cowardly indulgence or sensual affection, nor would she suffer anything of the kind in her subjects. If she at any time noticed that her care gave occasion to any sister to be too attentive to her bodily needs, or to become too much attached to her, she withdrew from her, doing for her only what was necessary. Nor did she leave the faults of the sisters unpunished, especially those against obedience or poverty. Once the sisters of the novitiate wanted a little doll to represent the Infant in their Christmas crib, so Mother M. Veronica told the extern sisters when they were going out, that they might try to beg one; after trying in

vain, they at last bought one, costing two cents, supposing that Mother M. Veronica would be satisfied with their economy. But what was their chagrin when on hearing of it, their mother, usually so gentle, suddenly became quite stern, rebuked them severely for their disobedience and would not even look at the doll. On the following morning they had to return it and get back the two cents. Another time a sister had been told to purchase some undervests. She got some, although at rather a low price, having a silk band at the neck. This seemed too great a luxury to Mother M. Veronica and the vests had to be returned to the store where they had been bought. Many other examples of the sort might be given. Once when she called a sister who was filling a pitcher of water, the sister finished filling the pitcher before answering the call. For this lack of punctual obedience she had to pour the water out again and was not allowed to take any to her cell that evening. Whenever a sister started to make objections to an order, she would cut short all such remarks, saying, "Deny yourself! Don't say a word, except, 'If obedience orders this, I desire it also.' Bow your head immediately and always say, 'Yes, dear Mother Abbess, most willingly, most willingly.'"

"When the bell rings for any exercise," she said to a novice, "then say, 'My Jesus, for love of Thee I will now be faithful,' and then go quickly where obedience calls you." Often she spoke to her children of the value of obedience. "When the bell rings for dinner," she would say, "and you obey punctually, you do the same as the great apostle of India when he converted thousands—namely, you fulfill the will of God."

As a model of poverty she placed before the eyes of

her sisters the Holy Family, and particularly the divine Infant in the manger. She rejoiced when she saw that her subjects loved and esteemed this virtue.

To give Mother M. Veronica a surprise, the extern sisters, for quite a long time, made their trips on foot instead of using the street cars, although this was very fatiguing because of the long distances they had to go. With the money they thus saved they bought a statue of the Blessed Virgin to give to their mother as a names-day present. This gift bought at so dear a price gave her great pleasure, but she felt very sorry for the poor sisters who were much worn out by their long journeys.

Notwithstanding her natural kindness and mildness, Mother M. Veronica endeavored to instil into the hearts of all those under her care, love and zeal for mortification and penance. She herself performed severe penances. One of her sisters once found one of her instruments of penance. She asked Mother M. Veronica why she practiced so much greater austerities than she would permit to others. The reply was: "To the superior belongs the austerity; to the subject, obedience." In these words she would give expression to the thought that the superior might to some degree be thus recompensed for the losses to her soul consequent upon her being obliged to command rather than to obey, and also that she might thus make up in merit for the hard physical work which the duties of her office seldom left her time to perform.

She placed less value upon extraordinary works of penance, although permitting them, than upon those mortifications which the faithful fulfillment of the duties of one's state and the practice of the virtues necessary to it, bring

with them. To a postulant who at table made a very wry face when eating some sour grapes, she said: "What a face! You will make a good Poor Clare if that is all the mortification you have!" A thing upon which she laid particular stress was that the sisters say the so-called "cross-prayer"* with arms well extended, without allowing them to drop. She even told the mistress of novices that one could judge of the vocation of novices partly by the fervor with which they performed this exercise. And it has in fact been observed that those who do violence to themselves from the first and keep their arms well extended generally become more fervent members of the community than those who yield to fatigue and allow their arms to droop.

It displeased her very much when sisters were immortified and particular about their food, she wished all to take of everything that was served, without making any distinction. Once when several sisters had expressed their dissatisfaction as to the manner in which certain food had been prepared, she gave so earnest an instruction on mortification at meals, that after that no one dared to show any discontent or ask for anything particular.

As Mother M. Veronica practiced mortification in regard to food, so she tried also to practice poverty, and to lead her subjects to do the same. In imitation of her divine Master she was most careful to allow nothing which His bounty bestowed upon them to be wasted. According to an ancient custom of the Order, she required the sisters carefully to gather and to eat the bread crumbs left at table.

* The cross-prayer consists of six Paters, Aves and Glorias, said while the arms are extended in the form of a cross. The Poor Clares say this every time they enter the choir after making an act of contrition, to gain the many indulgences attached thereto in the Order.

When milk or anything of the sort had been spilled she told the sisters to try to save as much as possible, taking it up with a spoon or piece of bread. It sometimes happened that cereals which had been donated, were so full of little worms that the cook could not remove them all no matter how hard she tried. Then Mother M. Veronica in her winning way would invite the sisters to be courageous and would say smilingly: "Now we must only close our eyes and open our mouths, then we will notice nothing, but you need not eat it if you have not the courage." Then she herself would set the example which, more than her words, helped the sisters to overcome their repugnances. She did not think it right that Poor Clares should spend money for articles of food the places of which could be supplied by others that could be begged or at least procured at a lower price, so it sometimes happened that porridge of oatmeal or barley was served instead of potatoes, and the sisters drank their cereal coffee black, when milk was too expensive. But with true maternal charity she always saw to it that her sisters were provided with sufficient nourishing food, and what had to be withdrawn in one way she endeavored to make up in another.

Another mortification which it pleased Mother Veronica very much to see in her sisters, was the patient and joyous endurance of the suffering caused by the extremes of temperature, sufferings which are much increased by their clothing and manner of life. Her smile at such times was doubly gracious as with great tenderness she tried to encourage them. "Children," she would say, "the cold (or heat) lasts but for a short time, but the reward which we merit will last eternally. Let us then not lose the least drop

of perspiration, but unite it all with the Precious Blood of Jesus and offer it to the Heavenly Father for the conversion of sinners and the poor souls in purgatory, who must endure a quite different heat. Remember what our dear Lord suffered for us, *our* perspiration is water, but *His* was Blood!"

Kind and charitable as Mother M. Veronica was in correcting and punishing, she could, nevertheless, act with all the authority and dignity of her office when the welfare of the community or the good of a soul demanded it. Once when the continued insubordination of a subject, whose mind was somewhat unbalanced, placed her under this sad obligation, she said to her in presence of the community: "Hitherto I have, as a mother, admonished you in charity, but now I speak to you as your superior. I depose you from your office as a discreet,* and I forbid you to assist at Divine Office in the choir."

The violence she had to do herself when administering a severe rebuke was, according to her own statement, so great, that her whole body trembled and her voice almost failed her. But thanks to the love and veneration in which she was held, as well as to the good spirit which reigned in her communities, she was rarely obliged to resort to such measures.

But even more than through such grave faults did Mother M. Veronica suffer when she realized that a sister had no understanding of, and no zeal for, the practice of virtue and advancement in perfection. "How sad it is," she once complained to the mistress of novices, "to know that a

* Member of the council.

soul is lost to perfection! Sister N. has no understanding of it. She will never be good for anything in our community." But when a sister showed a desire for sanctity, she encouraged and consoled her in every way. When a young sister became dejected because she did not make the desired progress, "Do not lose courage," she said, "no master and no saint ever dropped down from heaven. Anyone who wishes to learn a trade must practice it; so we also must exercise ourselves in virtue and make a step every day. If we commit faults, which probably will happen very often, we must ask pardon of our dear Lord and then go on courageously. This is what the saints did, and you also wish to be a saint, do you not?"

Mother M. Veronica's compassionate charity was not confined to the inmates of her monastery, she tried also, as far as lay in her power, to help all who came in contact with her. Indeed, many who had recourse to her prayers and those of her community frequently found that these prayers were miraculously answered. Physicians who were not of the faith have declared that certain wonderful cures wrought by the agency of these prayers could only be the work of a higher power.

Soon it became known far and wide that she was able to console and advise even in most difficult matters, and many a sorrowful heart found before the sombre grille of the parlor in the Poor Clare's convent, that peace and tranquility which all the riches and comforts of the world could not give. In time, however, visitors became so numerous that Mother M. Veronica found it impossible to attend to them, without neglecting important duties of her vocation and office. For a time she allowed herself to be carried

away by her zeal to become "all things to all men," to such an extent that she frequently did not hear the bell which called her to the conventual exercises; but when she realized that this was causing disorder and lack of punctuality in the community, she blamed herself very severely and resolved hereafter to converse with outsiders only in particularly important cases. Up to the time of her death she regretted her "frivolity," as she styled her too great goodness of heart, and shed bitter tears at the remembrance of those "sad" times.

CHAPTER XII.

VISIT TO HARREVELD.

Only through obedience and at the cost of great self-denial had Mother M. Veronica taken upon herself, as abbess, the charge of the new foundation at Cleveland, O., and as long as she held this office she most ardently desired to be freed from so heavy a burden, considering herself, in her humility, entirely unworthy and incapable of fulfilling the manifold and responsible duties connected with it. For this reason, she many times avowed to her former superior, Mother Marie of the Immaculate Conception, her faults and imperfections and begged her to send to the new community a virtuous and capable sister who could take her place. More pressingly than ever she renewed her entreaties towards the end of the year 1885, on account of the protracted illness of the mistress of novices, brought on by overwork, which rendered her incapable of presiding over the novitiate. Mother Marie compassionately replied that she would try to help her, but for the successful adjusting of the matter it would be necessary for Mother M. Veronica to make her petition in person to the community at Harreveld. "There is a great difference," she wrote, "between making a request by letter and treating of the affair personally, when one wishes to encourage hearts to make a sacrifice. By this I am not so much referring to her, who may be chosen for this office, as to the others who will have to give up a virtuous sister, one who is generally beloved.

. . Ah, dear Mother, how great would be my joy to see you once more that we might personally exchange thoughts. If this be God's will I would wish that you might make the voyage before the equinoctial storms begin."

Mother M. Veronica left the decision in this matter to her spiritual director, Rev. Fr. Francis Moenning, O. F. M., who, after some days of reflection, declared himself in favor of the trip, as did also the vicaress of the convent, Mother M. Josepha, who had at first been opposed to it. She also thought that, on account of her health, the mistress of novices, Sr. M. Theresa, should accompany Mother M. Veronica, and as the physician urged it, it was thus decided. They were to depart on February 18, 1886, the oldest one of the extern sisters being their companion. The greater number of the members of the community knew nothing of these plans until the day of departure. In the morning Mother M. Veronica received the renewal of vows of three sisters, telling them that she would be prevented from doing so on the proper date, it being customary among the Poor Clares to renew the vows on the anniversary of religious profession. Then assembling the community in chapter, she informed the sisters that she was obliged to go on a trip of some weeks to Harreveld on important business of the Order. But she did not wish to take formal leave of them, as she would soon be with them again. Notwithstanding this assurance, the sisters were much afflicted at the thought of not seeing their beloved mother in their midst for so long a time, and the anxiety of knowing that she was exposed to the dangers of a long sea voyage. They hoped, however, to obtain for her by fervent prayer a speedy and happy return. As an antidote for the sadness which quite naturally

would take possession of the sisters, the vicaress began the annual housecleaning and whitewashing, which kept all so busy that not much time was left for lonesomeness. But let us follow the travelers. Towards noon they drove to the depot in a closed carriage and took a train for New York. Here they found several Franciscan sisters awaiting them, at whose convent they were most cordially welcomed. In the chapel, at an early hour the next morning, the Very Rev. Fr. Custos Damasus, O. F. M., read Mass, at which the three travelers received Holy Communion. After a hasty breakfast they were accompanied to the pier by the Franciscan sisters. They were barely in time; they even had to run as fast as they could not to be left. But what was their consternation to find themselves quite barred off from the tender which was to transfer them to the ship. Demanding the reason of this, they were informed that the boat could not reach them on account of the many blocks of ice. In this difficulty Mother M. Veronica told her companions to pray, and she herself had recourse to her favorite patron, St. Gertrude. Their prayers were heard, another tender took them safely to the steamer Westernland, en route for Antwerp. Soon they were in the midst of the waves of the Atlantic, tossed by the cold north wind. In spite of the cold all courageously kept on deck to avoid seasickness. But this precaution availed not with the extern sister, she became dizzy and had to be taken to the cabin, where she lay sick during almost the entire voyage. Mother M. Veronica cared for her with her usual self-sacrificing charity, as neither she nor her invalid companion suffered much from seasickness. She also showed much sympathy for a French-American family in the first-class whose children were very sick. But

upon the invalid she bestowed particular care. As she felt better in the open air, for her sake Mother M. Veronica remained on deck even in the storm and rain. This was the occasion of an incident to which they both afterwards reverted with much amusement. One evening when the weather was particularly bad, an officer of the ship cried out to Mother Veronica: "What! no one would send a dog out in this weather and you are standing here on the deck. And even if you can stand it, think of your companion who is not as strong as you are by far!" Poor mother, thus was her charity frequently misunderstood, but she made light of all such mistakes.

On March 3 our travelers landed at Antwerp and were allowed to go to the depot without their baggage being examined. Being obliged to wait four hours for the train to Dusseldorf, they would have had time to take in the sights of the city, about which one of the sisters, who was acquainted there, related much that was interesting. But the mother's love for the vow of enclosure would not allow this. She thought it unbecoming in Poor Clares, who bind themselves by special vow to live strictly separate from the world, to wander through the streets of a city, sightseeing, even though their curiosity might lead them to visit holy places. The three, therefore, waited patiently in a solitary corner of the depot and rejoiced when the shrill whistle of the locomotive announced the hour of arrival. Soon they were carried through busy Belgium into the old German fatherland. They could hardly suppress exclamations of delight, when they beheld again the green hedges, old fashioned windmills and lonely chapels, all old acquaintances which they had not found in the new world. Their joy at beholding again their

native land was, however, clouded, and painful memories were awakened in their minds, by the rudeness of the conductors, which was in great contrast to the politeness and affability of the Americans, and which showed that the Culturkampf with its prejudices against religious, was not yet ended. These officials evidently considered it a mark of patriotism to treat religious in this way; it also seemed that they thereby wished to gain the good will of their employers.

About 9 o'clock in the evening the Poor Clares arrived at Dusseldorf and took a carriage which conveyed them in a short time to the door of their dear old monastery. Only a few extern sisters were living there to care for the building. So, after the coachman had rung the bell and the door was opened, Mother Veronica had the extern sister who was with her, go in first, as she was best acquainted with the place. What were the joy and surprise of the good portress to see standing before her her beloved sister who, during the first sad years after the expulsion of the community, had lived with her in this monastery, both in secular dress. A second extern sister and a novice were also present and all warmly welcomed Mother Veronica and her companion. In their joy the good souls were so confused that they scarcely did what was necessary to care for their guests. It was bitterly cold and the heavy habits of the sisters, damp from the sea air, made them feel this the more keenly. When in the morning, after a good night's sleep, they approached the fire, such a cloud of steam arose from their clothing, that one might think boiling water had been poured over them. And what pleasure Mother M. Veronica felt in taking the mistress of novices, who was a stranger there, around the build-

ing, in showing her the different rooms, almost every one of which called up some sweet recollection—her cell, the cells of the other sisters, the place where, as second refectorian, she had been accustomed to cut the bread for collation, where she had washed the potatoes, kept the vegetables, etc. There again at the parlor grate she had seen her beloved sister, brothers and grandparents after the painful leave-taking. But around the beautiful convent chapel and severely plain but devotional choir, clustered the sweetest memories. Her particular feasts in the Order, her clothing and religious profession, had been celebrated here, here at the little door of the choir-grate had she almost daily received her God, in the sombre stalls she had sung His praises or poured out her heart to Him in silent adoration; and now, again, this very morning she had heard Mass here and received Holy Communion.

But their stay at Dusseldorf was a brief one. In the afternoon they continued their journey to Harreveld. They reached their destination at 7 o'clock in the evening, a long wait at the station for a conveyance to take them to the monastery causing the delay. When they arrived the community was reciting Compline in choir, and our travelers went to the extern chapel to thank God for bringing them safely to the end of their journey. After Compline, the Mother Abbess Marie of the Immaculate Conception, the vicaress and first portress came to the parlor to greet their guests. Then the enclosure door was opened and once more, after fourteen days of unrest and distraction, they found themselves within the secure haven of the cloister. They were led to the refectory where the community was assembled to greet them, and Mother Veronica's emotion was so

great that she could not restrain her tears. Many of the sisters also wept tears of joy at seeing her once more among them. Until late into the night the two mothers sat together talking of old times and of the flourishing young community in the new world, of which Mother Veronica could not tell enough. In the morning some little gifts which had been brought from America for the different sisters were unpacked and the day was spent in festal rejoicing. The rule of silence which allows but one hour's recreation and prohibits conversation during the remainder of the day, was dispensed with for this day, assuredly there was much both to say and to hear. In the evening they feasted on the cake which the mother had brought with her from Cleveland, but which was now, as may be supposed, quite hard and dry.

CHAPTER XIII.

A DIFFICULT SACRIFICE.

Mother Veronica's joy at being again in her old community was not long to remain unclouded, for when God calls a soul to a high degree of perfection, He tries her by many sufferings, both exterior and interior, that being thus purified He may united her more intimately with Himself. Hardly had two weeks passed when Mother Marie unfolded to her a plan which not only called forth her extreme astoninshment, but caused a violent combat in her faithful, self-sacrificing soul. The plan was as follows: The mistress of novices of the community at Harreveld was to be transferred to the Cleveland community, where she was to hold the same office, and in addition that of vicaress or assistant, while Mother M. Veronica was to remain permanently in the Harreveld community. Mother Marie was so convinced of the excellency of this plan and believed so firmly that this change would be in accordance with God's holy will, that she endeavored with all her energy and powers of persuasion to gain Mother Veronica over to it. Then there ensued a fierce combat in the heart of the poor mother. She had indeed wished for nothing more ardently than to be relieved of her office that she might, as a subject, enjoy that peace and calm which are the reward of simple and humble obedience, but never had it entered her mind to leave her dear young community. Although she ever preserved a filial love and veneration for her old superior, and true affection for her

former sisters in religion, yet she clung with her whole soul to her beloved community at Cleveland, to which she was bound by the most sacred ties. She had founded it and was its first superior; in greatest poverty and amid indescribable difficulties, at the cost of many sacrifices, she, with a few sisters, had nurtured it and brought it to a flourishing condition; as abbess and mistress of novices, which offices she held simultaneously for several years, she had instructed the newcomers in all the duties of religious life, and had endeavored to lead them on to the practice of every virtue; day and night had she been solicitous for their spiritual and temporal welfare, and she had a true mother's love for them, while her subjects on their side, entertained for her the tenderest filial affection and unreserved confidence, and now all at once, without even having taken leave of them, she was forever to sever the ties which bound her to them! In vain did she turn in her distress to the confessor of the monastery at Harreveld, and even to the superiors of the Order in Holland, hoping to be advised not to take this step, all were on Mother Marie's side. Then she also was forced to believe that it was not the will of God she should return to Cleveland; her humility and conformity with the divine will triumphed over the love she bore her community, and she declared herself ready to resign her office as abbess and to accept that of mistress of novices in the community of Harreveld, provided her ecclesiastical superiors in America would consent. Mother Marie promised to look out for that and to accompany in person the sister destined for the Cleveland community.

Up to this time Mother M. Veronica had said nothing to Sister M. Theresa of the proposed changes, but now she

could no longer conceal the matter from her as the election for mistress of novices at Harreveld was soon to take place. The poor sister was speechless with astonishment and alarm. Although like her mother, she was willing to make any sacrifice God might demand of her, she could not be convinced that this was in accordance with the will of God. She did not doubt in the least that both mothers were actuated by the best intentions, and truly had at heart the welfare of the Cleveland community, that Mother Marie as foundress, felt it her duty to watch over the young community and see that a good religious spirit was maintained, and that she feared Mother Veronica's mildness, together with the almost greater indulgence of her vicaress, might sooner or later lead to relaxation of discipline; and that on the other hand, Mother Veronica thought herself unworthy longer to govern the growing community; but she saw likewise that so important a step should not have been taken without prolonged reflection, and that counsel should have been taken with the members of the Cleveland community and the superiors of the Order in America. Although she herself had a preference for superiors whose government was strict, she nevertheless highly esteemed her mother and was warmly attached to her, and she knew that all the members of the Cleveland community shared her feelings. She felt that she was but voicing their sentiments in objecting strongly to this plan, she told Mother Veronica that she thought she was acting precipitately, and when the latter replied that she could not now withdraw her resignation, and must leave all to the decision of the superiors in America, she resolved to plead her cause with them.

Meanwhile the sisters in Cleveland were kept in great

suspense. What did this mean? Their mother had promised to return in a few weeks, and now almost three months had passed and the letters, which had been few in number, contained no word of an approaching return; they were soon to learn the cause of this silence.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE NEW MISTRESS OF NOVICES.

Too soon, alas, the day of departure came, and mother and daughter took leave of each other with many tears, not knowing whether or not they would meet again in this world. The sisters of the Harreveld community also felt great sorrow at the separation from their beloved mother and sister. But all merely natural feeling must be kept in the background when there is question of fulfilling a higher duty. On May 20 Mother Marie, with the mistress of novices and the two Cleveland sisters, left Harreveld for Bremen. On May 22 they embarked on the steamship "Aller" which landed at New York on June 1.

At the beginning of this voyage Mother Marie, not understanding the impracticability of such a course, wished the sisters to remain below deck that they might not be seen, they, therefore, suffered much from seasickness. Notwithstanding this Sr. M. Theresa wrote a journal entitled "Charitas" about the interesting occurrences of the voyage. This was to send to the mother she had left behind, to afford her a little consolation and pleasure as well as the sisters at Harreveld, whom she had learned to love. During this voyage she also had many opportunities of becoming acquainted with the rare virtue of the sister destined for the Cleveland community. Although this sister had never seen a harbor, she would not allow herself a single glance at it from the carriage window where it lay before her. Because

her superior wished it, she stayed in the freshly-painted cabin during the most suffocating heat, and took food which she knew her sick stomach must reject and which caused such violent vomiting that her companions began to fear for her life. At a hotel where, for the four travelers, but two thin blankets and two feather beds could be provided as covering for the beds, she chose one of the latter and slept under it fully dressed in her heavy religious clothing as if it were in the depth of winter.* If she complained of anything, it was that Mother Marie was too good to her and would not let her mortify herself. Notwithstanding her own illness and weakness, she cared, with the greatest charity, for her mother, whose cabin she shared on the ship.

Upon landing at Hoboken, N. J., our travelers were received by the Franciscan sisters and entertained at their hospital near by. In the afternoon they resumed their journey to Cleveland, arriving at noon of the following day, the eve of the Ascension. They were welcomed heartily by the vicaress, Mother Josepha, and all the sisters. These had been prepared for Mother Veronica's non-appearance by the confessor of the community to whom she had written, and who told them that she would not return at present.

The vicaress left the government of the house entirely in the hands of Mother Marie, that she might regulate all as seemed best to her. She confided the care of the novitiate to the sister who had accompanied her from Harreveld, and appointed the former mistress of novices second portress, an office which afforded her the mental relaxation she so much needed.

* Feather beds are used as covering in some European countries, in winter.

In order to settle the affair concerning Mother Veronica, Mother Marie petitioned the Very Rev. Fr. Provincial of the Franciscan Fathers to make the visitation. This took place on July 13. Sr. M. Theresa now had the opportunity to plead her cause, which she was not slow in doing, and the other sisters expressed themselves as being very unwilling to lose their mother, and as believing it not at all for the good of the community that she be taken from them. After the visitation the Very Rev. Provincial spoke in terms of great praise of the community, commending particularly the spirit of prayer, of poverty and of charity he found reigning there. On the following day the Rev. Visitor, accompanied by the confessor of the community, went to Youngstown, Ohio, where Rt. Rev. Bishop Gilmour was staying, to give an account of the visitation and learn his lordship's opinion regarding Mother Veronica's remaining in Europe.

The Rt. Rev. Bishop was much displeased that he had not been consulted about the matter before; he answered shortly that all was to remain as it had been; he would do nothing for the community until he knew what were his rights and what were the rights of Father Provincial, and what connection the community had with the one at Harreveld, and, finally, that Mother M. Veronica was to return. When this decision was brought to Mother Marie by the Franciscan Fathers, she said: "Then I shall depart with Sr. Seraphica (the sister from Harreveld). Before this I looked upon *that* plan as the will of God, now I look upon *this* as God's will." On August 2 Mother Marie and Sr. M. Serephica departed for New York, on the 4th they embarked on the "Aller," and after a happy voyage landed at Bremen on

the thirteenth. On the following day about 6:30 o'clock in the evening they arrived at their monastery in Harreveld.

It would seem that divine Providence had ordered this matter for the good of both communities, and to try his faithful servants. The visit to Cleveland had been to Mother Marie a source of much consolation and joy; from the first she felt perfectly at home, as she wrote to Harreveld, and she expressed herself as believing that God must look with complacency upon this little community, where, in the midst of the great city, He was so faithfully served. She was satisfied that a truly religious spirit reigned there, and praised the sisters for their good conduct. Later she wrote to Mother M. Josepha that all her life she would thank God for having led her to Cleveland. The mistress of novices also was highly pleased with the sisters and extolled particularly their simplicity and docility.

In the meantime Mother M. Veronica had passed through a period of great interior suffering. Not knowing the opinion of her lawful superiors on the subject, she could not bring herself to recognize the divine will in her new position. Her distress was augmented by the fact that, during this whole time, she had received no letters from her beloved children. These Mother Marie had withheld in the well meant intention of weakening Mother Veronica's love for the Cleveland community, for she said, her heart must not be divided, if she did not break with that community she could not well govern the novitiate at Harreveld. By degrees, however, her state of mind became more calm and her will more abandoned, so that she was better able to resign herself to the separation from Cleveland and all connected with it. This disposition was effected in her particularly at

the time of her renewal of vows, on July 8, the anniversary of her profession. She was beginning to feel so happy that now she would be able to think more of the welfare of her own soul and to attend more to the work of her own perfection, to which she believed the many cares and burden of temporal affairs she had had in America to be a great hindrance, when now, suddenly and quite unexpectedly, on July 30 she received the news, through the vicaress at Harreveld, that Mother Marie and Sr. Seraphica were coming back and that she must return to Cleveland. On August 6 she received a letter from Mother Marie containing the same information. Her astonishment at this unexpected news was indescribable; and as Mother Marie merely stated that the bishop insisted on her return, in her humility she imagined that every one else concerned would have preferred it otherwise. All things now appeared to her in a new light—that she could ever have thought she could be of use to the Cleveland community now seemed to her a gross self-deception. On this subject, among other things, she wrote as follows: "I believed I had been acting according to my conscience and in a spirit of faith, and therefore according to the will of God in this matter, and now all was an illusion. Such terrible blindness certainly could come only from an extraordinary degree of pride. And now to be obliged to return where I have done such harm to my soul, is this not a sign that God Himself has given me up as lost to perfection? How can I, according to the ordinary rules of the spiritual life, still hope to attain perfection at my age, when I am in such a state that I must begin all over again? My spiritual director probably will have nothing to do with me

any more, and will not Mother Josepha dread my coming back?"

When Mother Marie arrived at Harreveld, Mother Veronica begged her to send Sr. Seraphica back to Cleveland, and to allow her, as soon as her three years of office should have expired, to return to Harreveld. But although Mother Marie showed not the least sensitiveness in regard to what had happened, she could not hold out any hope of help. She said that under the present circumstances, the community at Cleveland could get along better, than could her community were she to give up her mistress of novices.

Indeed, all this was evidently the disposition of divine Providence, for Sr. Seraphica lived only five years after this trip. She died, as did most of her sisters and brothers, of a lung trouble, the rapid development of which was due to her self-sacrificing courage and excessive exertions in nursing a sick sister. Holy as had been her life was also her death. The following details were written by one of her sisters: "During the time of her illness and especially in the last months when her sufferings reached their height, and nature might justly demand some alleviation, we first became acquainted with the great virtues of our beloved Sr. M. Seraphica; especially her blind, simple obedience which seemed to have no thought whether that which was commanded would do her good or harm; and her heroic mortification, so high a degree of which is probably rarely found, even in convents. On one occasion Mother Abbess asked her from what source she drew strength to endure her great sufferings, she replied with simplicity, 'I say sometimes: "O my crucified Jesus, all for purest love of Thee!" and then I can stand it again.'

"In her sickness she manifested a perfect conformity with the will of God, and an indefatigable zeal to attend the community exercises as far as obedience would allow her. As early as July 10, 1891, she asked for extreme unction, although she still went about and sometimes even came to Office. The following morning after Mass, the confessor of the community administered this holy sacrament, the invalid sitting in the choir in an armchair. For five months she continued to go fasting to the choir every morning, to receive Holy Communion with the other sisters. This soon began to cause her great suffering, she could take but a few steps at a time, and chairs had to be placed in the corridors and on the stairs that she might sit down and rest on the way. At last weakness and pain caused her to break down completely several times, and once the sisters had to leave her lying thus for almost an hour before she could be carried away. Mother Abbess had yielded to the fervor of the invalid, both because it was a consolation to her, though increasing her sufferings, and because it was so edifying to the rest of us; but she now put an end to this torture, and during the last four months she had to receive Holy Communion up stairs. She suffered intensely, particularly during the night. A decomposition of the blood caused burning pain, especially in the hands and feet, these as well as her arms and lower limbs were covered with red and black spots, large and small, and the doctor, full of compassion, said the sisters ought to pray that God would deliver her from such extraordinary sufferings.

"When Mother Abbess called her attention to the fact that she was allowed, for love of Jesus, to endure pains similar to those our seraphic father St. Francis had suffered,

she smiled with pleasure and happiness. The crisis was long and cruel. From Friday until Wednesday she lay, with little interruption, in the agony of death. Her mouth was strained open, her eyes rolling, her head constantly fell down upon her chest and then again was violently thrown backwards, and amid all these tortures she was fully conscious. When anyone whispered to her, 'All for love of Jesus!' she would summon all her strength to answer, 'Yes!' When told to kiss the crucifix she would press it to her lips with all her force. Four times the community assembled in the infirmary to say the prayers for the dying. She followed all, sitting in her armchair (for some weeks she had been unable to lie in bed). Full of resignation, she sometimes looked at her crucifix, then upon the picture of the Mother of Sorrows which the sisters held before her during the prayers. She herself asked for the candle and held it in her hand. She showed not the least disquiet or fear, but was always full of peace and confidence in God. On Wednesday morning shortly after she had received Holy Communion, there was a last hemorrhage. After Mass all the sisters went to the infirmary once more, and each went up to her alone. She understood all that was said to her and greeted and smiled kindly upon each one to bid her farewell. Certainly this was an example of admirable self-control in supreme agony.

"Our dying sister would have nothing comfortable, or rather nothing which might in the least alleviate her torments. She pushed away the pillows and blankets which we had put around her to keep her warm, and when she was too weak to do this, she gathered all her strength and cried: 'Away! away!' She sat in her hard willow chair, her feet, with the painful blotches, upon the cold floor.

Mother Abbess held the little cross in her hands, which had already begun to stiffen, and Mother Vicar repeated to her the little aspirations she had loved so much to hear during her illness. When Mother Abbess said to her: 'Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go forth to meet Him,' she made joyous movements and whispered: 'Yes! yes!' This last agony after the hemorrhage lasted exactly three hours. Shortly after 10 o'clock Mother Abbess repeated to her the last words of Jesus on the cross, and immediately after she had said: 'It is consummated. Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit,' Sr. Seraphica uttered a low cry, then breathed softly several times—and her beautiful soul was in eternity.

"As we live, so we die. Such a death could only follow a religious life spent in the exercise of heroic virtue."

During her stay at Harreveld, Mother Veronica was much edified by Sr. Seraphica. Whenever, in the refectory during meals, the latter had to read the Rule of St. Clare, and would come to the chapter in which St. Clare speaks of the obedience the sisters owe their abbess, she would begin to weep so as to be obliged to interrupt her reading. The cause of this was that she had once, through exaggerated zeal for mortification and faithful observance of the Rule, made objections when Mother Marie, on account of a great bodily weakness, dispensed her for some time from the fasts of the Order. When she became aware of this fault, she was ever after in regard to her superiors as though she had no will of her own; which must have imposed many a sacrifice upon a person of her intelligence and firmness of character. We might give many other examples of her virtue, if it were not that we would thereby overstep the limits of

this sketch, but in a soul tending zealously toward perfection, all exterior acts of virtue are but weak sparks of that interior fire in which her life as a perpetual sacrifice is consumed.

CHAPTER XV.

MOTHER VERONICA RETURNS TO CLEVELAND.

At Mother Marie's advice, Mother Veronica resolved to return to America with some Franciscan sisters of Olpe who were to sail on August 25. This somewhat hurried departure was necessary, because later she might not be able to find suitable traveling companions. She would have liked so much to stay longer after Mother Marie's return from America, and talk over many things with her, she would now even have liked to remain there permanently under her direction. But it seemed that in this visit to Harreveld she was obliged to sacrifice her natural inclinations all the way through, so she had to leave just at the time when she might have begun to enjoy herself, after the five months of mental anguish spent there. But as usual, she found her consolation in conformity with the will of God. "God be praised," she wrote, "we are not upon this earth to enjoy ourselves, still less have we entered religion for this purpose; the more sacrifices, the better." Before her departure she had the pleasure of a visit from her sister and the old friend of her girlhood days.

On August 23 Mother Veronica left Harreveld accompanied by an extern sister. The leave taking from Mother Marie and the sisters was doubly hard, because there was little prospect of meeting again upon earth. The two travelers arrived at Bremen in the evening and were conducted to the Hotel de Russic by a man in the service of St.

Raphael's Society. On the following morning they received Holy Communion in a neighboring church, and afterwards visited the Rev. Pastor Schloesser, agent of St. Raphael's Society, from whom Mother Veronica bought her ticket, and who exchanged her Prussian money for American currency.

The steamship "Aller" was to have sailed on Wednesday, August 25, but on account of necessary repairs was delayed until the following Saturday, and our mother was obliged to remain at the hotel during this time. The extern sister left on Tuesday afternoon, and the Franciscan sisters in whose company Mother Veronica was to travel arrived the same evening. The provincial superior of Olpe in America, four sisters and many postulants, made up the party. After tedious waiting they sailed at last for New York on board the "Aller."

This new ship had the advantage of a ladies' salon, but the second class cabins, for which, as before, through love of poverty, our travelers had taken their tickets, were in the lower part, and at the end of the ship. On this account they could not be so well aired, and every motion of the ship could be felt in them. These circumstances made them very disadvantageous for those inclined to seasickness. Notwithstanding the wonderfully calm voyage the whole company, on this account, became very ill, Mother Veronica not excepted. Here again she showed her self-sacrificing charity, for as soon as able to stand, she overcame her own weakness and nausea to nurse the others. After many years these sisters still spoke of her with admiration and gratitude. On September 7 they arrived at Hoboken, and soon after landing, a superior of the Franciscans and an extern sister from Mother Veronica's own community, came to meet them.

With a heavy heart Mother Veronica again set foot upon American soil. All her anguish during the last days at Harreveld was renewed. "What will become of my poor soul at Cleveland?" she asked herself. "What will become of me at the hour of death, if God has not willed my coming back, since, as Mother Marie believes, the Father Provincial of the Franciscans in whom I recognize my lawful superior, was opposed to it." This idea arose from a misconception on her part of the relationship in which her community stood in regard to the bishop of the diocese.

At 9 o'clock in the evening they started for Cleveland, but as they had taken a train which stopped at every station, they did not arrive at their monastery until 11:30 o'clock the following night. The oldest of the extern sisters opened the door, and Mother Veronica was once more within the walls of her beloved convent. After a visit to our Lord in the beautiful little chapel, and after the hearty greetings of the extern sisters and their postulant who had entered during her absence, Mother Josepha opened the enclosure door and greeted her with expressions of profoundest gratitude towards Him who ordereth all things well. All the sisters came forward and showed how heartfelt was their joy at the return of their mother. It being the hour for matins all then went to the choir.

In the morning after Mass, Mother Veronica went to confession and afterwards at the parlor grate, the confessor set her mind at rest on the subject which had so harrassed her. He told her what Mother Josepha had already said, that not only the Rt. Rev. Bishop but also Father Provincial and he himself had been opposed to Mother Marie's designs and had wished for her return. This assurance greatly com-

forted Mother Veronica and put an end to her interior troubles regarding what had happened. Soon after this she was still further encouraged by very kind and friendly letters received from the Very Rev. Fr. Provincial Maurice, the Rev. ex-minister Vincent and Rev. Custos Kilian.

Notwithstanding all the errors and misunderstandings connected with this affair, it would seem that the blessing of God, who knows how to bring good out of evil, rested on this voyage. This was doubtless due to the fact that both of those most intimately concerned, were actuated by the purest of motives, and that both communities had offered up so many prayers and sacrifices for its happy issue. If Mother Marie rejoiced to find a good religious spirit in the Cleveland community, Mother Veronica found among the sisters of Harreveld much that was beautiful and worthy of imitation. She noticed particularly how much the sisters loved holy poverty, and that this virtue was more visible there in all things than at Cleveland. Everywhere she saw the greatest simplicity, floors and bedsteads were entirely unpainted, and all other woodwork had only a thin coat of very common paint. Once a sort of prune pie was served, the crust of which was made of common bread dough, one of the sisters remarked: "This is our finest pastry." On another day the abbess saw that the soup which had been served was so full of tiny worms that it would be impossible to remove them all. She therefore told the sisters that they need not eat it, but if anyone wished to mortify herself she might do so. To her great joy not one of the sisters left any of the soup. Fresh bread was never served at the evening collation excepting on feast days, for, as the extern sisters were not allowed to collect alms in Holland, the sis-

ters at Dusseldorf begged the bread necessary for the community, which was sent to Harreveld and dried. In this supply of bread were often found pieces bearing the imprint of little children's teeth, and many times pieces from which the mould had to be cut. And these pieces were the most eagerly coveted by those religious who in the world had been persons of wealth and rank.

Mother Veronica also noticed how self-sacrificing and charitable the sisters of the novitiate were, how, after the example of Sr. Seraphica, their mistress, they willingly gave up their free time to do little kindnesses for each other when occasion offered, and how considerate they were of one another; how they tried to practice mortification on all occasions, and showed no sensitiveness when superiors treated them with a wise severity, and, finally, how faithfully they observed silence.

From all this Mother Veronica drew important lessons for the government of her own community, and after her return endeavored to be more strict and resolute with the sisters, which now did not seem to be so difficult, and particularly to instill more and more the spirit of holy poverty.

During the brief period in which Sr. M. Seraphica directed the novitiate at Cleveland, the sisters came to recogniez that severity, when accompanied by charity, is very advantageous and sometimes even necessary, and that those who allow themselves to be governed in this way, draw great spiritual profit therefrom; they therefore tried to show a more sturdy spirit.

During the autumn two postulants received the holy habit, and on December 3, 1886, the profession of three choir novices took place, an event which had never before occurred

during the twenty-seven years since the foundation of the monastery at Dusseldorf.

About this time the number of communions was increased so as to include all Fridays; now Holy Communion was received daily with the exception of the three last Wednesdays of every month. Mother Veronica, who from early childhood was penetrated with a lively faith and ardent love for the Holy Eucharist, wrote upon this subject to a superior: "The first Christians, although not consecrated to God, communicated every day, and religious ought to renew the life of the early Christians; the more devout communions, the more glory to our divine Savior, the more graces for those who communicate. The thought, tomorrow I shall communicate, is the most powerful preservative against sin and encouragement to the practice of all virtues. Whoever communicates devoutly every day can say with the apostle: 'To me to live is Christ and to die is gain. I live, but now not I, but Christ liveth in me.'"

On the other hand there was some fear in her mind that if the requisite degree of faith and fervor in the preparation were wanting Holy Communion might come to be received out of mere force of habit. With many persons this grace is more highly valued if they are occasionally deprived of it. However, the decision of the superiors on this point was highly gratifying to her and when the sisters showed great joy she said with feelings of profound happiness: "Children, children, what a grace! One Holy Communion more every week! One Holy Communion should suffice to make us saints, what therefore ought not so many more to accomplish!"

During her absence Mother Veronica had become ac-

quainted with the many excellent characteristics of her vicaress, Mother M. Josepha, she realized how admirably she governed the community, and how well suited she was to hold the office of abbess. During Mother Veronica's stay at Harreveld she had, at one and the same time, discharged the duties of abbess, vicaress, mistress of novices and sacristan, and all had been kept in perfect order. Her conduct toward Mother Marie and Sr. Seraphica had been extremely charitable and full of tact, and she was universally esteemed. In June of 1887 Father Provincial came to Cleveland and Mother Veronica told him that she wished to be freed of her office. He answered that the holy church desired the sisters be left free to vote as they wished. A former confessor also wrote to her that if she were re-elected she must not resist. Therefore, to have her plan realized she must see to it that the sisters of themselves elect another abbess; we shall see later how she brought this about.

As the community had now increased so that a few sisters could be spared from the midnight office, Mother Veronica in the winter of 1887, introduced the perpetual adoration. In Dusseldorf the adoration had been kept up for several years previous to the expulsion of the community. Mother Veronica wrote as follows concerning this: "So there is now at least one sister, representing the whole community, before the Blessed Sacrament by day and by night, to offer to God the five-fold sacrifice of adoration, praise, thanksgiving, reparation and petition, and particularly to draw His special blessings down upon our community and every individual member of it. So many persons forget God, many live in tepidity, millions do not even know Him, many hate Him and innumerable sinners and criminals

offend Him; but now there is one little corner more, where there is continually at least *one* consecrated soul endeavoring to make reparation, and imploring mercy for sinners, for the dying, for so many in great suffering, yes, for the entire church so bitterly persecuted, and for the whole world."

Meanwhile the end of Mother Veronica's term of office drew near. Among her writings was found a most touching self-accusation, which shows the more clearly her great humility, as the faults mentioned therein proceeded entirely from her great solicitude and charity for others. "May the good God preserve our community in future from such an imperfect superior as I am. Justly should I have been deposed long ago on account of my want of punctuality which disturbs all order, on account of my levity, and because I have entirely lost the spirit of prayer, although through the mercy of God I have not lost the esteem for it. That I have not committed still greater faults and done more harm to the community, is to be ascribed to the many prayers offered for me and to the virtuous lives of our sisters. Nor can I attribute it to myself, that the blessing of God has rested upon the community during the past years; I have prevented the still more abundant effusion of this blessing. Ah! that God would grant me a contrition proportionate to my sins, and the grace to live so long, and in such a manner, that I may make satisfaction and reparation for all. God's ways are wonderful, it would seem that He wishes our little foundation at Cleveland to redound to His glory by choosing for it so extremely miserable and imperfect an instrument, that the honor and glory of it might not be given to men but to Him alone."

At her request, Father Provincial permitted Rev. Fr.

Kilian to come to Cleveland to obtain from the Rt. Rev. Bishop, whose intimate friend he was, permission to conduct the ceremonies of the clothing of two postulants, the profession of three novices, and the visitation and election. This permission was granted. The clothing and profession took place on December 30, in the morning, and the visitation was held in the afternoon of the same day. As the Rev. Fr. Maximilian, guardian of the Franciscan convent, who was to accompany the visitor through the building, could not be present on the following day, the local visitation of the monastery was made first. In order the better to gain her end and not alarm the community before time, Mother Veronica had, until now, kept her project a secret from all but a few of the sisters. But now she assembled them all in chapter before the visitation, and made known to them her ardent desire, conjuring them to grant her this favor. She said she had worked day and night for the welfare of the community, putting in the background the care of her own perfection, that now they ought to allow her a little rest to attend to her own soul. She shed an abundance of tears and begged so piteously that the sisters were deeply moved.

Before giving audience to the sisters individually, the visitor made a heartfelt exhortation, advising them to grant Mother Veronica's request, to do it for love of her. At first he had been opposed to this idea, and even just before the visitation had remarked in presence of the Father who accompanied him, that he thought matters ought to remain as they were. But Mother Veronica had replied with great decision: "Rev. Father, I cannot possibly accept the office again." It would seem now that God had disposed His heart in her favor. Naturally Mother Josepha was proposed, but

she also at first resisted, in her lowly opinion of herself not feeling capable of discharging the duties of this office. But Mother Veronica promised to assist her in every way possible. On the following morning the visitation was ended and the election took place. All went on most harmoniously, and as Mother Veronica afterwards wrote, the good God had mercy on her, inclining the hearts of the sisters in her favor. Mother M. Josepha was unanimously elected abbess. Only through generous love of Mother Veronica did she accept this office so repugnant to her, and which seemed to her so terrible a burden. She was, moreover, obliged to accept the office of mistress of novices which she had filled for some time to the satisfaction of all. Mother M. Veronica was elected vicaress.

CHAPTER XVI.

SEVERE TRIALS.

Under the government of the new abbess, God did not fail to send to the community of Poor Clares at Cleveland the greatest proofs of His predilection, crosses and afflictions in abundant measure.

Soon after the profession of one of the last choir novices, it was found out that she suffered from hallucinations, in consequence of which she caused great disturbance and scandal. Finally it was found necessary to send her away from the monastery, and at the advice of the Rev. Fr. Provincial, she herself asked for a dispensation from her vows.

During the winter of 1888-1889 almost all the sisters fell ill, hardly one was left to care for the others. In connection with severe colds, there was a bad stomach trouble which made it almost impossible to take any food without increasing the malady. As the infirmary was so small as to accommodate only two sisters, the others were obliged to stay in their unheated cells, which in the extreme cold of that winter much retarded their recovery, and which, necessarily, made it more difficult to give them the proper care. Here Mother Veronica's charity and spirit of sacrifice again found a wide field. As Mother Josepha herself was very ill, she could go about among the sick all the more freely, consoling, encouraging and bringing remedies and little comforts. But the day came when she, too, was in the infirmary,

having caught the epidemic; but even here she managed to care for her sick companions.

In the exercise of her works of charity and mercy, Mother M. Veronica found a faithful and devoted assistant in Sr. M. Hyacintha, one of those who had come over with her from Holland at the time of the foundation. This sister was, as it were, her right hand, and did more in her generosity than Mother Veronica would have dared to ask. Besides this she worked untiringly for the temporal welfare of the community, trying by sewing and embroidering to assist in its support, often sacrificing part of her night's rest. For herself she asked not the least consideration, she did not even wish her services to be acknowledged, but on the contrary tried to do all so secretly and silently, and in such a natural and unpretentious way, that it would seem she was merely doing her duty and could not act otherwise. But those who knew her more intimately, clearly perceived the hidden and perpetual life of sacrifice this generous soul was leading. With great fidelity she had filled various important offices, and had always belonged to the number of the discreets or council members. For several years she was first portress, an office which, on account of the necessary intercourse with outsiders in an order where enclosure is one of the vows, is of such importance that the Rule of St. Clare devotes an entire chapter to it. Ever since Mother Marie's visit to Cleveland Sr. M. Theresa had been second portress. These two sisters were thus constantly together and were connected by the closest ties of mutual love and esteem. In the discharge of their common duties the most perfect harmony always reigned, and although Sr. M. Hyacintha could not always get the necessary help from her still feeble as-

sistant, she never complained. Charity and patience were the predominating virtues of this noble soul and these never failed her. Least of all did they fail her during the severe illness which, in this winter of 1888-1889, kept her confined to her bed for many weeks. This began with a fever brought on by a cold, and which so suddenly and violently attacked her that she could keep on her feet no longer. With great difficulty her companion succeeded in getting her to her cell and putting her to bed. She was afterwards taken to the infirmary, where for a long time she lay quite prostrated. So great was her weakness that when she tried to get out of bed she was obliged to go on her hands and knees, and yet, in this manner she crawled one night to the bed of the second portress, who on account of a throat trouble was also confined to the infirmary, to inquire if she were worse. When she saw how busy the infirmarian was, she tried, in a half sitting position, to wash the dishes for her. When the crisis was past her condition gradually improved, but she did not recover her former strength.

The following winter Sr. Hyacintha made a most fervent retreat, at the end of which she made a general confession of her whole life. During this retreat—it was in the month of February and the weather was unusually cold—she, in the discharge of her duties, could find almost no time to warm her feet, which from going barefooted on the icy floors were often stiff from cold. Soon afterward she took a severe cold and was obliged to keep her bed. Although in the beginning her sickness seemed less serious than the one she had passed through the previous winter, she immediately said she would die of it, for if she would have to suffer again what she then suffered, it would cost her her

life. All possible means were taken to preserve the community from the loss of this dear member, physicians were consulted, various remedies were resorted to, but all was in vain, our Lord did not wish to try His faithful spouse longer here below, she was ripe for heaven and He wished to give her the reward of her virtues and her sacrifices. Her patience and resignation in the terrible sufferings of her last illness were indescribable. Even during the most terrible suffocating spells, no complaint escaped her, her eyes were fixed upon the crucifix which was held before her. If the doctors ordered anything special in the way of food or other comforts, she would say: "Oh, that is too good for me." To the end she was full of tender regard for others, begging the infirmarians to spare themselves, and was blindly obedient when, as sometimes happened, her well meaning superiors or attendants, by mistake, gave her something or did something for her, which, instead of alleviating her pain, only increased it. Not until her tortures reached their climax did she make known how pitiable was her condition. When the physician declared that on account of the weakness of her heart her life was in danger, she received the last sacraments in the presence of the whole community, asked pardon of the sisters for all her faults, and henceforward showed no interest for the things of this earth. She longed for the heavenly country and endeavored to the best of her ability to prepare for this last and most important journey. Although the spasms of suffocation, in each one of which it seemed that she would breathe her last, caused her death to be momentarily expected, it came finally when no one thought of it. A good physician who had been called thought that a change of medicine might prove beneficial,

but hardly had she taken the first teaspoonful when the end came. It was about 1 o'clock in the afternoon. Mother Josepha, Mother Veronica, the second portress and the infirmarians were standing at her bedside. As Mother Abbess was too much moved and excited to say the prayers for the dying, Mother Veronica did so, shedding many tears. The others placed the black veil on her head, as the Rule of St. Clare prescribes, and held the blessed candle within her cold hand. "Oh, this is death!" she suddenly exclaimed. Then stretching out her arms cried out: "I see it! I see it! I see it!" Her lips moved once more as though to whisper the name of Jesus—and all was over—her sufferings were ended. And although the community lost in her a compassionate, self-sacrificing and loving sister in this world, it gained a new intercessor before the throne of God.

More crosses—these were the first blessings the beloved departed obtained for her mothers and sisters. While watching beside her bier, several of the sisters took severe colds, this immediately made the rounds again, and, as on the preceding year, hardly one sister could be found in perfect health. With some the sickness assumed an alarming character, one sister received the last sacraments and twice the prayers for the dying were said for her; but with the help of God all at length recovered.

Shortly before her last illness, Sr. Hyacintha one day said quite unexpectedly to her assistant: "You ought to lighten our mother's work and take up the care of the novitiate again. God has given you the ability for it, but you are too delicate for a portress." Greatly surprised, Sr. M. Theresa protested, alleging the weakness of her head, which, although much improved, was not yet entirely well. Never-

theless, this brief conversation made an impression on her, the more so because with the exception of a few words regarding the affair of Mother Veronica at Harreveld, this was the only familiar conversation they ever had together, notwithstanding their great affection for each other. And when, after Sr. Hyacintha's death she was obliged to fulfill all the duties of portress alone, she saw that she had been right. When, therefore, shortly afterward, several postulants entered whose training for the religious life required much care and attention, she offered herself to Mother Abbess, to whom, on account of her manifold duties and occupations, this was most welcome. Mother Veronica had begged the visitor not to oblige her to take charge of the novitiate, that she might not be even more burdened with work than before, for, as Mother Josepha did not understand English, Mother Veronica had her correspondence to attend to and had also to receive the numerous visitors. She also gave instructions to the community and devoted herself particularly to the extern sisters, while Mother Josepha bestowed her especial attention upon the cloistered sisters and presided over their work. Thus the two mothers directed in most beautiful harmony the community committed to their charge. But Mother Josepha found it difficult to bestow the requisite time and attention upon the novitiate on account of the many business affairs and cares connected with her office as well as on account of her delicate health, it therefore was a great relief to her that the former mistress of novices had so far recovered as to be able to assist her in it. Two sisters of more robust health who were better able to manage the heavy articles which had often to be taken in and given out, were appointed portresses.

CHAPTER XVII.

PLANS FOR A NEW FOUNDATION.

When Rev. Fr. Kilian Schloesser, O. F. M., came to take leave of the Poor Clares before going to Chicago where he was to hold the office of praeses, Mother Josepha asked him in a joking way to look out for the foundation of a new monastery of Poor Clares in that city.

Fr. Kilian, taking the matter in earnest, wrote to Mother Veronica during the same year concerning it. She, thanking him for his kindness, replied that the community had not enough subjects suitable for a new foundation. Mother Marie also wrote him that the matter could not be thought of before the expiration of at least five years, even if the community of Harreveld were to send sisters.

In August, 1887, Fr. Kilian wrote again on the subject, saying that Chicago would not be a bad place for a foundation; the great metropolis, called the modern Sodom, needed prayer, it was large, there were sixty-four Catholic parishes, and the city counted about 800,000 inhabitants. At the last chapter he had casually mentioned the subject to the fathers, and had at least met with no opposition, although they found the project premature. The principal thing was that money was needed for the settlement of the fathers as well as for the Poor Clares. On September 19 he wrote that he had obtained permission of the Most Rev. Archbishop Feehan for the foundation of a monastery of Poor Clares in Chicago; that his Grace had said this would be a blessing

for the whole diocese. Fr. Kilian then advised that a site be bought soon, for, aside from the fact that prices were constantly rising, all suitable property within St. Augustine's parish, lately established by the Franciscans, would soon be sold. By paying several hundred dollars down he could secure a site, and the remainder could be paid in separate payments within five or six years at 6 per cent interest. It would, however, be advisable to borrow the full sum, about $5,000, at Cleveland, which could certainly be had at 4 per cent interest. Mother Veronica now wrote to Fr. Provincial asking him to decide the matter, but before her letter reached him he wrote to her, expressing his displeasure that Fr. Kilian, without his knowledge and consent, was taking steps for the foundation of a monastery of Poor Clares at Chicago.

Mother Veronica, now quite alarmed, immediately replied: "Only through our superiors can we know the will of God, therefore I shall never make a foundation, however favorable prospects may be, even though everything were to be donated, without your consent, Reverend Father. How could God's pleasure rest upon a work which is deprived of the blessing of obedience? There can be no question of any foundation either at Chicago or elsewhere if you have not given your consent. A thousand times rather no foundation, than one in opposition to holy obedience, and so opposed to the will of God. My remark that a second convent of our Order in America would be of advantage to us, and that in my opinion Chicago would be a suitable place for such an one, was meant only on condition that you give your consent. I am sorry for what you tell me in your letter, and if my remarks before stated should have been the cause of

MONASTERY OF POOR CLARES AT CHICAGO.

it, I beg you for the love of God and our holy Father St. Francis to pardon me. With the grace of God I shall always try to be an obedient child.

"I feel very sorry that Father Kilian should have any trouble on our account. He meant well and certainly did not intend to act contrary to obedience. To his infirm physical condition and to his good heart which is ever ready to help and do good to others, it must be ascribed that he took steps in this matter before asking your advice and consent. The actual purchase of a site, however, he would not have made without your permission. . . . Cleveland, September 25, 1887."

The Very Rev. Fr. Provincial Maurice Klostermann, O. F. M., replied to Mother Veronica as follows, in a letter dated October 25, 1887: "The Poor Clares must know themselves whether or not they are able to found a new monastery. I only wished to remark that no new debts should be contracted, for a loan of $5,000 would mean from $200 to $250 interest annually. And there is now a debt of $1,300 on the Franciscan convent which ought to be paid by the sisters of St. Alexis Hospital and the Poor Clares."

To this Mother Veronica replied on November 8: "You write, Rev. Father, that we ourselves must know whether or not we can found a new monastery. But I could not rest satisfied with my own decision. In this important matter I wish to do only God's holy will and only through obedience can I find this out with perfect certainty. And although I ought to desire the spread of our holy Order, I will undertake the projected foundation at Chicago only in obedience. I humbly beg you, therefore, Rev. Father, to decide the mat-

ter for me after I have made known to you my ideas on the subject.

"For a long time we have felt that a second convent of our Order in America would be desirable, we could then mutually help each other, transfer sisters from one house to another if it were thought best, etc. Moreover, we have very little room left for new comers, and if we do not make a new foundation we shall be obliged to build an addition soon. Now in regard to the 'where,' it seems to me very fitting that in the large city of Chicago, the modern Sodom, a little monastery of Poor Clares to be a house of prayer and penance, should be erected. It seems to me also that Chicago might be a good place for vocations, and also for collecting alms, as the city is so large and the people so generous. We would then soon be able to pay our debts. Regarding the 'when,' it is my opinion that, if you, Rev. Father, decide that we found a monastery in Chicago it will be necessary to purchase a site immediately because if we wait longer a suitable place can not be had and prices are constantly advancing. But it seems to me we ought to wait a few years before making the foundation, and train the young sisters more thoroughly in the religious life, and in the meantime pay for the place. Besides I would like to have a few years to renew in myself the religious life, and to give myself up more entirely to prayer, which I need so much, before a new foundation would bring to me new distractions.

"Another reason for the advisability of purchasing a site at present, is the exceeding kindness of the present most Reverend Archbishop towards us, and we cannot say how long he may live.

"My perplexity about making this foundation is in my extreme misery. Our mother vicar or myself will have to undertake it, and I fear that without Mother Vicar I cannot get along either at Chicago or here in Cleveland. But upon that which we undertake in obedience, God's blessing always rests, and it seems that here God wishes to make use of a most miserable instrument for spreading the Order, thereby to show that the good done is His work, not the work of man. I think that if for the sake of God I forget myself and generously place my confidence in His assistance, He will mercifully aid me.

"Pardon me, Rev. Father, if I do not understand just how a certain sentence of your letter is to be understood. You write that you wish to remark that no new debts should be contracted. Do you mean that the Fathers in Cleveland should not go into new debts for us, or that we ourselves should not contract any debts? In the first case, I am myself of the opinion that the Fathers should not be burdened with our debts again. But if by the above sentence you mean that we also should not go into debt for a new foundation, the matter will end here, for without going into debt we cannot undertake the foundation. And as God makes known to us His will through you, Rev. Father, it will in this case be the will of God that we have no new foundation."

In a letter dated November 26, Fr. Provincial replied: "I approve of your explanations, and if you wish you may purchase a place in Chicago. Fr. Kilian may assist you. In regard to debts I meant that they ought not to be put upon our monastery, as we shall have enough of our own at Chicago."

Before receiving this letter Mother Veronica had written to Fr. Kilian, thanking him for the kindness he had manifested towards the Poor Clares in his endeavors for a new foundation. She also told him that she had left the decision of the whole matter to Fr. Provincial, and that she much regretted it should have caused trouble. Father Kilian answered that all was now right again. Thus the first difficulty regarding the new foundation was settled, but as is usually the case in undertakings which are to be a source of much good, new obstacles soon arose.

Fr. Kilian before coming to Cleveland for the visitation mentioned above, had visited the most Reverend Archbishop in company with Fr. Provincial, and had spoken to him of the establishment of a monastery of Poor Clares in Chicago. He was not able to arrange the matter so that in Chicago the sisters might be under the jurisdiction of the Franciscan Order. His Grace said he would allow the Fathers to do everything for the sisters, but he could not relinquish his rights. He gave permission, however, that the monastery be canonically erected with solemn vows and apostolic enclosure. Father Kilian now informed the Bishop of Cleveland of the projected foundation at Chicago. Before he returned thither he received a letter from the Archbishop informing him that the Bishop of Cleveland had written to him that he could give him no sisters; therefore he must give up the thought of it and all arrangements they had made together were null and void.

Fr. Kilian gave this letter to the Bishop of Cleveland, who told him that, after making inquiries, he had informed the Archbishop of his complaints against the Poor Clares. Bishop Gilmour had been under the impression that the

foundation was to be made immediately. He asked Fr. Kilian if he thought the sisters who had just received the habit or made their vows were already sufficiently trained in the religious life for this purpose. But when Fr. Kilian replied that the foundation was not to be made until after two or three years, he immediately said: "After two or three years they will be trained enough." At Fr. Kilian's request he promised to write to the Archbishop again.

After his return to Chicago Fr. Kilian again visited the Archbishop, supposing that Bishop Gilmour had already written to him. Unfortunately this had not yet been done, and the Archbishop was not favorably inclined in the matter. Fr. Kilian therefore wrote to the Bishop begging him to write the promised letter. The Bishop replied asking him if it seemed reasonable to him to purchase land for a foundation or to speak of it at all, before he knew whether or not the Archbishop were willing to receive the sisters and he to let them go. He doubted this, nevertheless he was willing to write to the Archbishop if Father Kilian wished it.

In the meantime, Mother Veronica, at the advice of Father Kilian, had written to Bishop Gilmour asking his pardon for all the faults she had committed against his authority. This letter made a good impression and disposed him favorably toward her. Indeed, Mother Veronica's mistake had arisen entirely from her ignorance regarding the rights of the Bishop, she believed that the matter still stood just as it is said in the Rule of St. Clare, according to which the superior of the Franciscan Order is also superior of the communities of Poor Clares. In her love for obedience, she would not at any price have acted contrary to the will of a lawful ecclesiastical superior. So when Fr. Kilian, excusing

Mother Veronica, presented the matter to the Bishop in this light, he yielded and wrote to the Archbishop as follows:

Most Rev. P. A. Feehan, D. D.:

Dear Friend: Rev. Father Kilian, O. F. M., has made a very strong appeal that I permit a colony of Poor Clares from here to go to Chicago, to be established near a new church which the Franciscans are about to build. I dislike to refuse Rev. Fr. Kilian, as I have for him a most sincere and profound esteem. So I have agreed that, after two or three years, if you are willing, I will let a colony go to Chicago.

My objections have been and are: the community here has grown too fast, and the sisters need time and training ere they would be permitted to begin new foundations. Delaying for three years, this will be in measure remedied—the more, if those sent out are selected with care and with due regard to disposition and training, which I would try to do, if they go to your diocese. Of course the difficulty attending the foundation has passed, and there has been a very honest effort to amend for it, and I would not care to carry it any further, as I think my reprimand has had a very salutary and curative effect. So if you agree to take them, we will after three years further training permit a colony to go to Chicago. With much respect I remain in Christ

R. G. Gilmour, Bishop of Cleveland.

On April 27 Father Kilian wrote to the sisters that he had been to see the Archbishop, who in reply to his question if he had received a favorable letter from Bishop Gilmour, smiled and said that he had. Then the matter was once

more debated, and finally the Archbishop freely gave his consent, but on condition that the foundation be made at the time specified by Bishop Gilmour. Fr. Kilian remarked that it would be necessary to have some written document in his hands, as at the end of two or three years they might both be dead. The Archbishop admitted this, and when Fr. Kilian produced the prepared document that he might sign it, his Grace read it over several times, and then said he did not find it specific enough, that in the written permission for the foundation of a Poor Clare's monastery in his diocese, he wished to have the two following essential points or conditions explicitly included, viz: that the Poor Clares acknowledge, first, that they are under his authority and jurisdiction, second, that they came with permission of the Bishop of Cleveland.

On the eve of Pentecost, May 19, 1888, Fr. Kilian wrote to Mother Josepha: "As with the feast of Pentecost, the day of the foundation of the holy Church, the work of redemption reached its completion, so it would seem that the Holy Ghost on His feast wishes to complete the intended good work of the daughters of St. Clare. The concession of the Most Reverend Archbishop has been given in writing, and the place bought with the condition that the Poor Clares have two weeks time to reflect whether or not they will accept the agreement. I therefore send you (1) a copy of the permission of the Archbishop for the foundation of a monastery of Poor Clares at Chicago at the end of three years, (2) the agreement of Mr. E. A. Warfield, owner of the twenty-four lots, which according to my opinion and advice you would better purchase, (3) the abstract of the land to be purchased, and finally, (4) I enclose a map made by my-

self, which will show you how far your convent will be from that of the Franciscans."

After long discussions and much trouble on the part of Fr. Kilian, the site which at first was to have cost $10,000 was purchased for $8,000, with Father Provincial's consent. Mother Veronica's joy at the success of her favorite plan was indescribable, and, although the debts contracted were heavy for a community living on alms, she trusted in divine Providence and her confidence was not misplaced.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AN EXEMPLARY SUBJECT.

Once more the time for election approached, and justly did the sisters believe they could as usual look forward to it without uneasiness, for they knew that in either of their mothers they would find an excellent superior. But a great surprise awaited them. In the lowly opinion which each entertained of herself, and the repugnance of each for the office of abbess, as well as better to regulate some difficult affairs, and to be able to undertake the new foundation with more peace and tranquility, the two mothers agreed together to propose as abbess the sister who for some time had had charge of the novitiate. Owing to Mother Veronica's powers of persuasion, so many were gained over to this plan, that Sr. M. Theresa received the number of votes requisite for a canonical election. Msgr. F. Boff, vicar general of the diocese, presided at this election, and when the newly elected abbess tried to object, he commanded her in obedience to accept the office. She was obliged at the same time to take charge of the novitiate. Mother Josepha was elected vicaress and Mother Veronica, who had most urgently begged to be left without any office this time, was elected a simple discreet or council member. As Mother M. Theresa had not yet reached the canoncical age—forty years—it was necessary that Bishop Gilmour should approve of her election, this was perhaps the last time the venerable prelate wrote his signature. Shortly after this he went south to

seek recovery, or at least respite from a serious illness. But God decreed otherwise. He died at St. Augustine, Florida, on April 13, 1891. His mortal remains were brought to Cleveland, and, amid universal regret and mourning, deposited in the vault of the cathedral.

No one rejoiced more at the result of this election than did good Mother Veronica. At last that which she had so ardently desired was granted; she was free from every responsible office, and now had time to begin (as she expressed it) to work undisturbedly at the perfection of her soul. Perhaps no circumstance in her religious life showed more the greatness of her virtue and her ardent longing for perfection, than her readiness to submit to Mother M. Theresa as her superior; for aside from the fact that the latter was fully twelve years younger than she and had been received into the Order and trained to the religious life by her, there was so great a difference in their dispositions, that on both sides there was need of great self-denial and countless sacrifices, in order to get along together in such intimate and mutually dependent relations. For, while Mother Veronica possessed the charactertistic tranquility and slowness of the Westphalians, and in her goodness of heart endeavored as much as possible to lighten for the sisters the burden of the austere Rule of St. Clare, and was ready at all times to encourage and console other, Mother Theresa possessed all the warmth and ardor of the inhabitants of the Rhine-land; she was quick and impulsive in her actions, somewhat inclined to too great severity and ever on the lookout lest softness and relaxation of religious discipline creep in. Doubtless an all wise Providence had led these two souls together, that they might, as it were, mutually wear off and polish the

little unevennesses of their characters, and each acquire the virtues she lacked; a thing which they well recognized and tried to put into practice. Therefore, notwithstanding all differences of character, they were united by a bond of most intimate and sincere friendship, which neither separation nor death could weaken.

As subject of a younger superior, Mother Veronica showed by her edifying example, that the beautiful lessons she had hitherto taught to others regarding virtue and perfection, had come from her innermost heart and that she regulated her own conduct by them. No one was more zealous in regard to spiritual exercises, no one more humble, more charitable, more patient and obedient than she. At this time she write several meditations which had made the deepest impression on her and by means of which she constantly animated herself to new fervor. She also made a collection of most beautiful acts of interior prayer, or affections, especially of love, contrition, humility and conformity with the will of God, that she might always be well supplied with subjects for mental prayer, even during those periods of greatest dryness and desolation with which God not infrequently visited her. To keep her attention fixed during the divine Office, she composed beautiful meditations according to the cycles of the great feasts. For this purpose, also, she put various marks into her breviary and underlined words and passages which particularly attracted her. Like a prudent merchant, she demanded strict account of herself in the particular and general examens of conscience and noted gains and losses. She deplored and wept over her little faults, as though they were great crimes, and composed the most touching prayers expressive of contri-

tion. In a little book written by herself a whole section was devoted to meditations and reflections for awaking acts of contrition, which she made use of when going to confession. With such lively faith did she approach the Holy Table, that she trembled with awe and reverence, and she always feared to receive the all holy God into a heart not sufficiently pure. This was one of the chief difficulties of her spiritual life, but holy obedience gave her the necessary confidence. To this virtue she now devoted herself with especial fervor in order to regain that which during her years of superiority, she believed she had lost. However slow she was by nature, she was nevertheless quick and agile when there was question of executing a commission or order of her superiors, and she observed even the smallest points with conscientious exactness. Once at chapter Mother Theresa had recommended that, when both windows and doors of a room were open, chairs should be placed against the latter to prevent them from slamming in a sudden draught. Now could Mother Veronica be seen quietly bringing chairs from different parts of the house and placing them against the doors, as if she alone had received that order. One room having three doors and but one window, generally open in summer, and in which but one chair ordinarily stood, gave her particular trouble. The chairs she brought here from other rooms were always taken away again as they were needed elsewhere. Another order also gave her much trouble. It was that if the sisters should see that any drops of water had been spilled on the floor, they should immediately wipe them up. Often Mother Veronica could not find a cloth near at hand, and was obliged to bring one from some distance, then she could not get through with her work in time

and would come late for a spiritual exercise, which would draw down upon her a reprimand; this she would receive in profound humility as something she had well deserved.

As proud souls, full of self-love, take great pains to defend their imaginary honor and excuse their faults, just so eager was she to accuse herself of her faults and imperfections, and to condemn herself and allow herself to be condemned for them. Like a criminal she received reprimands with bowed head, and joyfully performed ever penance. All this was not only put on exteriorly, nor was it caused by narrowness of mind, but proceeded from her profound humility, in which, interiorly, she continually most bitterly reproached herself for her "levity, tepidity and little progress in perfection." When, however, she was obliged to defend the honor or interest of her community, her deportment was so full of dignity, that she inspired all with respect, and betrayed the nobility of her birth and the excellence of her education.

Her spirit of faith in regard to her young abbess, which manifested itself in great respect and childlike confidence, was admirable. Her attitude, the tone of her voice, in short, her whole demeanor showed that in her she did not honor a human being but the representative of God. Although during the many years of her religious life she had accumulated treasures of knowledge and experience, she left herself entirely to the guidance of her former pupil in matters of the interior life. Her love of obedience went so far that in after years, while she was abbess of the community at Chicago, she wished to vow obedience to Mother Theresa; but the latter would not accept this.

In one point, however, Mother M. Veronica always re-

mained the mother of the community—in her indefatigable charity. Her tender, compassionate heart could not resist the desire to watch over the sisters and nurse the sick back to health. The little pharmacy of the community was under her care, she knew all the medicines and was at all times able to find that which could give relief. Her greatest anxiety now concerned the health of the young abbess, in whose family consumption was hereditary. She easily took cold in winter, and Mother Veronica had always been very attentive to her at such times, supplying her with warm clothing and obliging her to wear woolen socks and stay in a heated room. For all this a few words sufficed as long as she was a subject, but under the present dispensation Mother Veronica's words no longer possessed such power, and she was forced to beg, to implore, to redouble her vigilance. To compel Mother Theresa to stay where it was warm, she would bring her work and sit in the same room with her, and whenever she tried to leave, Mother Veronica would place herself against the door to prevent her exit.

One winter when the whole community was attacked with the grippe, Mother Veronica had all she could do to nurse her dear sick, among whom was Mother Theresa. She had procured a feather pillow for her, as the Rule of St. Clare allows in case of sickness, but Mother Theresa, knowing that there were not enough feather pillows for all the sick, and that Mother Veronica herself had severe pain in her head, stealthily placed the pillow upon the latter's bed and retired to rest. Suddenly her slumbers were disturbed by a storm of reproaches, and, awaking, she beheld Mother Veronica standing before her with the unlucky pillow in her hand. A greater sorrow she could not have caused the good

mother, who forgot herself completely for others. She was very indignant that Mother Theresa had not kept the pillow, and she knew a long list of similar crimes which the abbess had committed. In order not to cause her so much distress and also not to frustrate the plans for the new foundation, Mother Theresa at last began to yield to her in such little things.

The other sisters experienced no less Mother Veronica's self-denying and self-sacrificing charity. This virtue which she had especially cultivated even from childhood seemed to have become a second nature—she *must* do good to all. If love of our neighbor is the criterion by which we may judge of our love for God, how great and how pure must have been the flame of divine love burning in the heart of Mother M. Veronica! Unfortunately there are few even in religious houses who have a correct idea of true love, and fewer still who really possess it. Let us hear Mother Veronica on the subject: "Pure love is dead to all self-seeking, it nourishes itself with suffering. He, therefore, who performs a duty which is pleasing to him, more willingly than one which is not, has not pure love, because by this nature does not suffer; whosoever serves his neighbor that he may gain his good will or secure his services in return, does not possess it, for in this his nature suffers no privation; he who serves God for the sake of His gifts and consolations, knows nothing of it, he seeks delight instead of suffering. But he who undertakes most willingly those tasks and services which are most difficult for nature, and which find least acknowledgment, he who renders his neighbor services even when they are misunderstood and rewarded with ingratitude, finally, he who serves God just as faithfully in the midst of

darkness, dryness and desolation, as in the time of the greatest illumination and sweetness, he possesses pure love."

If this love is so beautiful and exalted in the eyes of men, that like a magnet it attracts all hearts, how pleasing must it not be to God who is all pure love, yes, who is love itself! "God is love, and he who abideth in love, abideth in God and God in him."

How pleasing to the divine Heart must the soul of His faithful spouse, Mother M. Veronica, have been, a soul which possessed so high a degree of this love, and what treasures of grace in this world and of glory in the next must He not have prepared for her. May she find many fervent imitators, particularly in those monasteries which she founded, the life work of whose inmates is to make satisfaction to the divine Majesty for the coldness and ingratitude of the world.

CHAPTER XIX.

FOUNDATION AT CHICAGO.

Now that Mother M. Theresa had relieved them of the direction of the community, the two former mothers found leisure to apply themselves to working out the plans for the monastery at Chicago. The first intention was to erect a frame house and build the monastery proper later on, but this was found to be too expensive a plan, on account of the arrangements which would have to be made for observing enclosure; so it was at last resolved upon to build at first one wing of the brick monastery. Mother Veronica, who possessed much talent for works of this kind, made the drawings, while Mother Josepha's practical good sense aided in the arrangement of the different apartments. Mother Theresa was also called in for consultation, and a drawing which she had made of the monastery at Dusseldorf rendered valuable assistance. It was at this time also that the plan was drawn up for the addition to the monastery at Cleveland, which was built during the summer of 1892.

Towards the end of the same year sad tidings were received from Dusseldorf, whither the exiled community at Harreveld had now returned. Even while Mother Veronica was at Harreveld a relative of one of the sisters brought the news that the culturkampf was nearing its end, and that in the near future religious would be allowed to return to their convents.

On September 10, 1887, Mother Marie received the au-

thorization of the state for the return of her community, and on October 14 and 15 the sisters in two parties traveled to Dusseldorf. The large convent at Harreveld Mother Marie left to the Franciscans, who retained their study house in that place and used the material of the building thus left them for adding a wing to their monastery. Concerning the return Mother Veronica wrote: "Thus God, after a long exile of twelve years, has led the sisters back within the sacred walls of their old convent, where since their return the praises of God resound by day and by night in the divine Office, yes, the holy life of our good sisters itself is most beautiful praise of God, and will certainly draw down His blessing upon our beloved and severely tried native land."

When, in March of 1890, the heroic Sr. M. Seraphica was at the point of death, she said that she would soon take away another member of the Community. Probably no one thought at that time that this would be her beloved Mother Marie, as she then enjoyed comparatively good health. But during the following year the first symptoms of the malady which was to carry her to the grave manifested themselves. She had an internal wound to which was added, during her last days, a stroke of paralysis and the setting in of gangrene. One of the sisters, later on her successor in office, wrote to Cleveland: "Her sufferings during the last months of her life were indescribable, she writhed like a worm in her bed and sighed and moaned with pain. On account of her great weakness she could scarcely bear to have anyone come near her; she could not speak during the last days, nor could she endure it to hear others speak. Her face was changed, pale and drawn. Her death agony continued for

several days and nights and the tortures and anxiety which she endured were unspeakable. But thanks to His almighty grace, the thoughts of the dear sufferer were always fixed upon God and eternity; she did not wish to hear of anything but prayer, and always prayer. Whenever the sisters tried to alleviate in any way her great sufferings, she thanked them as long as she was able to speak, but said that the only refreshment she desired was prayer. Her final agony lasted fully twelve hours uninterruptedly. From evening all the sisters remained with our dying mother to pray together, as she so much desired. Suddenly, at 11:30, the hard, labored breathing ceased, and while the names of Jesus, Mary, Joseph were repeated to her, she moved her dying lips and we could plainly see that she repeatedly said "Jesus"; then a last painful twitching about the mouth which immediately disappeared to give place to a rapturous smile, with which her soul entered eternity. The face of the departed had a youthful appearance, she looked like a child smiling with happiness, there was something angelic in the expression of her countenance—a reflection of the joys of heaven. Oh, how we thank God for the great grace vouchsafed to our beloved mother! Had not the moment of her death been a truly happy one, her features could not have taken on that beatific expression, for up to the last moment she was racked with torturing pain. In consequence of the paralytic stroke and the gangrene which caused frightful wounds, the pain was so great that it could not be relieved even by the application of ice; the ice bags dried out. She could hardly swallow a few drops of water in her burning thirst, she could rest only on burning sores. Must we not believe that God heard her prayer to be allowed to suffer her purgatory in

this world? When we tried to console her with this thought she replied: 'O, this is not worth mentioning, our Savior has suffered much more, when I look at the crucifix all my pain seems as nothing.' Thank God, our dear mother was able, as she so ardently desired, to receive Holy Communion daily to the last. This was very difficult during the last days, but our divine Savior helped us. For the last week, since we can no longer pray near the corpse of our beloved mother, in whose features the peace of heaven was reflected, we really feel the painful void, which involuntarily reminds us of the favorite maxim of the dear departed one, 'God alone!'"

After Mother Marie's death it was soon seen how beloved she was, not only by her subjects within the monastery walls, but also by persons outside, who ceased not their importunities until, on the afternoon before her burial, her corpse was exposed to their view at the choir grating. They sent letters containing petitions with her to the grave, and gave whole packages of rosaries to the sisters to be touched to her body. During the funeral services the church was crowded, and, notwithstanding the cold, all went to the cemetery. At the burial no eye was dry and many wept aloud. Yes, even outside the cloister walls the charitable and zealous mother had gained many friends, who keenly felt her loss and who honored her memory as that of a saint.

When the sisters at Cleveland learned of the dear mother's death, their hearts were filled with sadness, but at the same time also with consolation. Mother Josepha and Mother Veronica realized in a particular manner the magnitude of this loss, and the latter wrote a beautiful letter to the sisters at Dusseldorf, giving expression to her feelings.

Although the sisters hoped that one who had suffered so much had already been admitted to the beatific vision, yet many masses and Holy Communions were offered for the repose of her soul, and for a long time the solitary walls of the monasteries of Dusseldorf and Cleveland re-echoed the supplications which arose for her to the throne of God.

Nearer and nearer the time approached when a new and painful trial awaited the members of the community at Cleveland and particularly the loving heart of Mother Veronica, for the three years at the end of which the foundation at Chicago was to be made, were drawing to a close. Hitherto the good mother had thought chiefly of the good which would result from it, but now she began to realize the sacrifice which separation from so many dear ones would entail. To this were added doubts and apprehensions on account of the possible failure of this foundation. She feared that Mother Theresa, as soon as left to herself, might ruin her health forever and she be obliged to return to Cleveland. Things went so far that she resolved to give up for a while the projected foundation and to continue her beautiful and peaceful life as a subject. Soon she won Mother Josepha over to this way of thinking, and now it was an easy task to set all the sisters against the foundation.

In February, 1892, the Rt. Rev. I. F. Horstmann, D. D., was made Bishop of the diocese of Cleveland; of him so many good and noble things were said that the sisters felt the greatest confidence towards him, even before knowing him. As the Rt. Rev. Bishop's predecessor had laid down the condition of the three years' postponement, it was agreed upon among the sisters that the new Bishop should decide the matter. It was to be settled on the occasion of a cloth-

ing and annual visitation which the Rt. Rev. Bishop made in person the first time. All expressed their opinions regarding the foundation. Because of the former enthusiasm about Chicago, Mother M. Theresa had never taken seriously the little remarks opposing it which had occasionally been dropped. What, then, was her surprise when having stated her reasons for the foundation, the Bishop replied to her: "Do you want to undertake that all alone? All the others are opposed to it and on your account." Presently a light dawned upon her, and she saw that Mother M. Veronica's humility and excessive solicitude for her had here played another trick. She explained to the Bishop how unfounded these fears were, and he answered that he approved of the foundation provided the community had a sufficient number of subjects. As soon as Mother M. Theresa left him she remonstrated with the two mothers for wishing to give up the foundation, after all the trouble and sacrifices it had cost, just at the moment when with full consent of all superiors it was to be undertaken. They finally came to the agreement of proposing to the Bishop that the sisters, after having all the reasons for and against the foundation, explained to them, give their votes in chapter, to which proposal his Lordship agreed in a last conversation held in the parlor.

The consultation took place in chapter before the assembled community on the following day. When the sisters learned of all the trouble and unpleasantnesses Fr. Kilian had had, what expenses had been incurred, and what sacrifices had already been made, all were of the opinion that now, placing their confidence in God, they ought to begin the foundation; even Mother M. Josepha and Mother M. Veronica yielded. When the Rt. Rev. Bishop heard this he

willingly gave his consent. The next thing was to build the new monastery. Through the kindness of Fr. Provincial, Brother Adrian, who was an architect, was engaged to draw up the plans according to the sketches made at Cleveland, and to superintend the building. As soon as the wing was under roof two extern sisters were sent to Chicago to take care of the new house until the arrival of the others.

Meanwhile Mother Veronica, in her zeal for the glory of God and the welfare of the Order, had undertaken several important works which she would have liked to see completed before beginning the foundation. A learned and gifted Franciscan father, Rev. Fr. Solanus, had, at her request, composed a special office in honor of St. Colette, which Mother M. Veronica wished to have approved by the Holy See. For this purpose she undertook to get the signatures of the members of all Poor Clare communities. Through the mediation of the Very Reverend Father Procurator Aloysius Lauer, O. F. M., later general of the Franciscan Order, this office received the approbation of Holy Church.

Still another work cost Mother M. Veronica much labor, viz.: the preparation for print of a Custom Book. She did not, however, succeed in finishing this before she left Cleveland. But a beginning was made, and a beautiful act of consecration to the Blessed Virgin which served as an introduction, and in which the Queen of heaven was chosen as abbess of the two monasteries, was written. This was said aloud in the choir. The statue of the Blessed Virgin was beautifully decorated, many candles were burning and the insignia of the abbess, the seal and keys of the monastry, were laid at her feet. Mother M. Veronica, kneeling at

the foot of the altar, in the name of all made the act of consecration and the choir sang appropriate hymns. Now Mother Veronica thought she might look with more confidence into the future, being thus assured of the protection of the most holy Virgin, to whom she was so devout. Her devotion led her to delight in arranging little feasts in honor of the mother of God. One of these was the crowning of her statue. The sisters, carrying flowers and candles and singing hymns, went three times around the choir, the abbess carrying the crown came last. When for the third time they came before the altar, the abbess ascending the steps placed the crown upon the head of the statue while the crowning hymn was sung. From this time the Blessed Virgin always wore her crown on feast days. The statue of St. Joseph was also crowned with like ceremonies.

Divine Providence had destined for the foundation of the little colony of Poor Clares at Chicago, the same year in which the World's Fair took place. That the sisters might not be obliged to travel with the crowds, preparations were hastened. All hands were busy, some embroidering and making the church vestments, getting ready the clothes for the sisters, others busy packing. Mother Josepha took charge of all this work, and Mother Veronica and Mother Theresa were busy with the Custom Book up until the last moment. For months the extern sisters who were waiting in the new monastery had been begging incessantly that the others would come. The three years were up, and from all sides inquiries were coming in as to whether the foundation had not yet been made. On account of work yet to be done, and for many reasons, the sisters would have liked to delay a little while, but the importunities and the fears that all

THE COURTYARD OF THE CHICAGO MONASTERY.

might end in failure, urged them on so that at last April 27, 1893, was fixed as the date of departure. Mother M. Veronica was appointed abbess and Mother M. Josepha vicaress of the new community, these with three choir sisters, two extern sisters and a novice were to begin the establishment. Mother Veronica failed not to give beautiful and touching exhortations to those left behind, and to remind them of many wholesome things. Only those who knew her tender, loving heart could understand what this separation cost her. And, indeed, no less painfully did those who were left behind, especially Mother M. Theresa, feel the loss of their beloved mother. But the thought of the long desired second colony of Poor Clares in America and the good it was hoped would result therefrom, gave to all strength and courage to bear even that which was most difficult.

Silently and peacefully those destined for the new community left their dear monastery at Cleveland, silently and peacefully they entered the great metropolis where the World's Fair was just beginning. The attention of the world was directed toward the latter, while but few gave any thought to the beginning of a poor little community of the daughters of St. Clare. But upon which of the two works may the infinite God have looked down with more good pleasure?

CHAPTER XX.

THE NEW COMMUNITY.

When the little band of Poor Clares arrived at Chicago they were met at the station by two Franciscan fathers who had come to take them to their monastery, which was close by. They first visited St. Augustine's Church and then drove in a closed carriage to the convent. The two extern sisters who had been living there for six months to care for the place, anxiously awaited them. It was a great joy to Mother M. Veronica, and in fact to all the sisters, to see before them this new convent build in true monastic style. Mother Veronica felt amply repaid for all the pains she had taken in drawing up the plans. The road which led up to the house, however, was very bad; at some distance from the convent the sisters were obliged to alight, otherwise their carriage would have shared the fate of a wagon, which a short time before had remained sticking in the mud in the middle of the street. Unaccustomed as they were to wearing shoes, and encumbered by their heavy mantles, it was with difficulty that they reached the entrance, where a workman pleasantly greeted them, and, showing his hands all covered with yellow clay, said in all simplicity, "I would like to give you my hand if it was not too dirty." This the sisters acknowledged silently and with a smile went towards the door. What was their surprise to be met by the two fathers who had been at the station, and who had hastened before them to the convent. They carried lighted

candles and led the way to the chapel, reciting the *Magnificat,* while the sisters followed. Then the *Te Deum* was said, the future chaplain and confessor reciting the verses and orations. During the silent thanksgiving which followed one of the extern sisters entered and announced in a whisper that breakfast was ready; the fathers then took their departure.

As the furniture did not arrive on the same day, Rev. Father Symphorian, superior of the Franciscan monastery, who was a second Father Kilian to the sisters at Chicago, ordered that some mattresses be brought in before evening. Mother Veronica and Mother Josepha preferred to spend the night in the extern part of the house, for the Most Reverend Archbishop was expecting a visit from them on the morrow, and after they had once crossed the threshold of the enclosure they did not wish to go out again.

On the following morning, April 29, feast of St. Peter the martyr, Rev. Father Symphonian offered the holy sacrifice of the Mass in the new monastery. Now for the first time our divine Lord descended upon the new altar, there to take up His lasting abode. He had come to be the companion of that solitude, which for love of Him they had freely chosen, and to be their strength in the fulfillment of their sublime mission in the midst of the great city. While from many corners of this city the pestilential odor of vice and crime rises up, calling down the wrath of God, there was henceforth to arise uninterruptedly to the throne of the Most High, from one more hallowed spot, the sacrifice of the divine Lamb, in union with the prayers and austere penances of his beloved spouses, to appease His anger and attract upon the inhabitants of Chicago benedictions instead of punishment. Only now, that they had in their midst their best

and most faithful Friend, did the sisters feel at home in their new dwelling, and they endeavored to keep Him company as much as they could, and by their love and zeal to rejoice His divine Heart.

In spite of the wickedness of the great city which they had chosen for their home, the little colony was soon to experience the goodness and liberality also to be found there. In the very shadow of those dens of vice which have earned for the city its shameful reputation, are to be found pious and virtuous souls equal in purity and innocence to a St. Agnes or St. Aloysius, while even on week days the churches are filled with devout worshipers during Mass, and the number of frequent communicants is very large. The generosity of these good people towards the house and servants of God, the sisters were soon to become acquainted with.

Some time after Mass, at the appointed hour, Mother M. Veronica and Mother M. Josepha, accompanied by an extern sister, set out for the episcopal residence, which is six miles from the monastery. During the drive through the great metropolis, Mother M. Veronica read a book in order to guard herself from the danger of giving way to curiosity. Only when the extern sister would say, "This is a Catholic church," would she raise her eyes and adore the Blessed Sacrament.

When they arrived at the episcopal palace, a servant opened the door, and behind him they beheld the tall, majestic figure of the aged archbishop, who received them as kindly as if they had been members of his own family. The venerable prelate was visibly edified with Mother Veronica's humble demeanor; whenever he addressed her she arose

from her seat and knelt down. At the end of the conversation he said: "God bless you, my daughters, I feel happy to have you in my diocese." Then he accompanied them to the carriage, which, as it was quite contrary to his custom, was considered a mark of very special favor.

Great was the happiness of the four choir sisters, when after their mother's return they entered the enclosure never more to leave it.

As they had entered the city so silently and unknown, it was for some time very difficult to get along, but they endeavored faithfully to fulfill their daily duties, particularly of prayer, leaving to Providence the care of their temporal necessities. Soon an article from the gifted pen of Miss Eliza Allan Starr as well as one written by Rev. Father Zepherinus Engelhardt, O. F. M., aroused interest in and esteem for the daughters of St. Clare, and from this time on the community was generously supported. During the first days after their arrival an exemplary postulant entered, who at her clothing received the name Sister M. Clare. Others soon followed and the community increased rapidly.

The monastery and chapel were dedicated May 27, 1893. Notwithstanding his many occupations and the great distance, Most Rev. Archbishop Feehan wished to perform this ceremony in person. Pleased with the stately and austere appearance of the building and the poverty and simplicity he met everywhere, the good archbishop expressed his satisfaction to Mother Veronica. Not noticing during the conversation that he was coming too near the sharp spikes of the grille, he slightly wounded himself. The dedication of the chapel was followed by High Mass, during

which the archbishop in an impressive sermon gave expression to his esteem of the hidden work of contemplative orders. As enclosure had already been declared, only the clergy were admitted to the dedication of the cloistered part of the monastery. After the ceremony was ended the Most Reverend Archbishop once more expressed his pleasure at having among the many religious communities of his large diocese one of Poor Clares.

Mother M. Veronica's humility and obedience so edified him that on one occasion when, through one of the extern sisters, she excused herself for so often troubling him with her questions and petitions, he answered with great benignity: "Oh, I always have time for such business."

June 23, of the following year, was the twenty-fifth anniversary of Mother M. Veronica's entrance into the Order. This silver jubilee was celebrated amid great rejoicing. Her children, both at Chicago and Cleveland, loaded her with presents and good wishes. The sisters at Cleveland had endeavored particularly to provide the poorly furnished chapel at Chicago with suitable vestments. These gave great pleasure to Mother M. Veronica, but what were most welcome to her were the spiritual gifts, the numerous Holy Communions, Masses and prayers which each sister promised to offer for her, for she felt very much the great need she had of the particular assistance of God in her new and difficult position. While her subjects in songs and poems gave expression to their love and gratitude towards their dear mother, she humbled herself profoundly at the remembrance of the faults and imperfections of her religious life, and she wondered how God could for so long a time have had patience with her. Several times she spoke

of the deep impression the thought made upon her, that she had already lived through more than one-half of the years of her pilgrimage on earth, and that before the number of the years of her life would be doubled she would be in eternity. Through love for her sisters she, notwithstanding the emotion which repeatedly brought tears to her eyes, took part in the general rejoicing and suffered them to bestow upon her every mark of esteem.

On this occasion, through some mistake, the monastery at Chicago being situated in a new street little known at that time, a whole package of letters of congratulation from Cleveland was lost, and the poor mother might have thought that her children there had already forgotten her. But the regret which these expressed as soon as they learned of it, proved much better than the congratulations could have done, that their love for their first superior had not yet grown cold.

CHAPTER XXI

MOTHER M. VERONICA'S LOVE FOR THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

In a short time the new monastery was filled with fervent postulants and novices, and as only one wing had so far been built, it was found necessary to continue the building. Mother M. Veronica endeavored to improve the original plan and for this purpose sent for plans of different convents of Poor Clares in Europe, from which she borrowed the cloisters of the inner court. When all had been corrected and worked out to her satisfaction, steps were taken to begin building. The community had very little money at its disposal, but Mother Veronica succeeded, though not without great difficulty, in borrowing the necessary sum at four per cent. interest. Fortunately, building material was very low at that time on account of the tearing down of the World's Fair buildings.

Through the kindness of Very Rev. Father Provincial Michael Richart, the lay-brother and architect, Adrian Werver, was intrusted with the direction of the work. But as the brother was often obliged to travel on account of other buildings and business of his Order, Mother M. Veronica asked and obtained permission of the archbishop to go, whenever the workingmen were not there, with her vicaress to the place where the work was going on, to see that all was being done as it should be. For during the time of building, enclosure had been limited to the wing inhabited by the community, and the doors leading out into

the open air were the limits of this enclosure, to go beyond which the permission of the archbishop was necessary for the cloistered religious.

Aided by prayer, the building progressed happily and rapidly, without a single accident, and in less than a year the new part of the monastery was ready for occupancy. It was a great relief to the sisters, after the long confinement made necessary particularly by the enlargement of the chapel, to take possession of the new wing and to have all the necessary conventual apartments. The practical arrangement of the building was admired by everyone and persons repeatedly remarked that Mother M. Veronica must have a wonderful head to be able to keep in mind so many details.

Several great benefactors took care to furnish the building, and particularly the chapel. One lady presented an almost life-sized statue of St. Clare to be placed in a niche above the entrance, another benefactress gave the bell for the tower, which was keyed to give the correct pitch for the Divine Office, and which was solemnly blessed by Rev. Father Symphorian, O. F. M. For the chapel, choir and corridors several statues and crucifixes were donated, and some of these were placed upon altars in open spaces and niches, giving the interior of the monastery a venerable and devotional aspect. The sisters considered it an honor to be allowed to care for and to decorate these little shrines and on festival days they were visited with prayer and song. A grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes was the first thing which met the eye of the visitor when ascending the stairs. A holy water font was near by and also a box containing numbered prayer tickets for the poor souls in purgatory.

Mother M. Veronica's spirit of poverty in regard to the building deserves our admiration even more than her clear-headedness and prudence. With greatest difficulty the architect succeeded in persuading her to take better brick for the outside of the chapel, but afterwards she reproached herself severely and shed tears of contrition. At first she would allow the chapel as well as the choir merely to be whitewashed, and when later she consented to have them calcimined to avoid the inconveniences arising from the frequent whitewashing, she would allow only the chapel and not the inner choir to be decorated. A few clouds were painted on the wall over the altar, and when the artist added a border he was obliged to remove it. Mother M. Veronica gave as a reason for this, that if it were left thus, her successors would think they were not failing in holy poverty if they allowed the entire choir to be decorated.

For the rest, she would have only the cheapest and most common materials and always insisted that the entire monastery bear the stamp of poverty and simplicity. An enemy to all comforts and modern improvements, she would at first have no heating apparatus put in; following the custom of the Poor Clares, a few rooms only were to be heated by little stoves. It therefore happened in the cold of winter that the water pipes froze and even cracked in several places. To prevent this, Mother M. Veronica often went about barefooted for hours during the night in the bitter cold, placing the foot stoves belonging to the sleeping sisters under the pipes in places where they might be likely to freeze. One morning she was so benumbed with cold and exhausted from her nocturnal duties, that the sisters were able only with great difficulty to bring her to herself.

When kind benefactors wished to donate superfluous or too elegant things, she did not hesitate to decline the offer, thanking them for their good intentions.

Again Most Rev. Archbishop Feehan wished to come in person to dedicate the monastery after its completion. This ceremony was more imposing than the first. The Poor Clares were now better known and had won many friends and benefactors in the great city. More than twenty priests accompanied the archbishop when he entered the enclosure; after them came the extern sisters, and within, the choir sisters followed the line, deeply veiled. Seculars were not admitted into the enclosure, although a great crowd was present, to whom refreshments were served in the basement of the convent. The Most Reverend Archbishop was both pleased and surprised at the rapid growth of the community; he congratulated Mother M. Veronica and her daughters and spoke of them in terms of highest praise to those who accompanied him. Some of the priests afterward jokingly remarked that they must not betray anything His Grace had said for fear of making the Poor Clares proud.

A true daughter of St. Clare, Mother M. Veronica had at heart not only the exterior beauty of the house of God, but far more the reverence and devotion which in this holy place should be shown to her heavenly Bridegroom. Jesus in the most holy Sacrament was her All. For Him no sacrifice was too great, no burden too heavy. Everything should contribute to His honor and glory, and it was her most ardent desire that everyone of her subjects give herself up entirely, interiorly as well as exteriorly, to His service and His glorification. She watched with anxious solicitude that in the Divine Office the smallest rubrics be observed, and

VIEW OF CHOIR IN THE MONASTERY AT CHICAGO.

that her sisters be faithful in the performance of all the rules and prescriptions with which love for the Blessed Sacrament had inspired the two holy mothers of the Order, St. Clare and St. Colette. Whenever abuses or negligences began to creep in, she not only endeavored to correct them by admonitions and instructions, but she made the sisters practice the ceremonies and recite the psalms outside of the time of office, marking the correct accents and pauses; in fine, she did not rest until this exercise of divine worship was performed in the most well ordered and becoming manner possible. This same reverence she demanded of the sisters in all their other devotions; for the least fault against it a penance had to be performed, and for every slight disturbance in choir an act of reparation was to be made by the offender while prostrate before the Blessed Sacrament. When the most holy Sacrament was exposed for adoration, the sisters were required to redouble their marks of reverence and to avoid the least want of respect. For example, the sacristan was not allowed to put new candles into the candlesticks while these were standing on the altar, she had to take them away before replacing the burnt out ends with new candles. All were obliged to be most careful not to make any noise at this time nor to turn their backs to the Blessed Sacrament.

For some time a very poor oil was used for the altar lamp, in consequence of which the lamp often went out. This caused Mother M. Veronica a great deal of trouble; often she would leave her cell after Matins to see if the lamp were still burning, and if she feared that it might go out, she would place another lamp upon the altar.

Once when she received some journals of the Blessed

Sacrament, and read of the profanations and sacrileges which were committed in France towards our Blessed Lord in the Sacrament of His love, she was almost beside herself, she would have moved heaven and earth to prevent these crimes and to make reparation for them. She ordered prayers and works of penance to be performed in her community, and that the fervor of her sisters in this regard might never grow cold, she prescribed that the first Friday of every month be spent entirely in prayer and works of reparation.

We will here give a brief description of these exercises as they reveal to the reader more clearly than many words could do, the spirit which animated Mother M. Veronica. The Holy Hour from eleven to twelve, which had already been observed at Cleveland, opened these exercises. After the Guard of Honor hymn came the first great act of reparation, during which the sisters prostrated with faces to the ground. A meditation followed lasting until midnight, then came Matins and Lauds of the Divine Office and the other exercises as usual. On the following morning the Communion of Reparation was offered, and at nine o'clock the whole community again assembled in choir to recite Matins and Lauds of the Office of Reparation.* First, incense was burned before the altar while an appropriate hymn was sung. The abbess then said the preparatory prayer kneeling at the foot of the altar, after which, standing before the lecturn in the center of the choir, she solemnly intoned the verse: Open, O Lord, my lips, etc., then the office was continued in somewhat the same order as that

* The Office of Reparation in English can be procured at the monastery of Poor Clares, West Park, Ohio, for five cents a copy, fifty cents a dozen.

in which the Divine Office is said. This office commemorates the incidents of the Passion, following the mysteries step by step, and is throughout, as its name implies, one of reparation. The Paters and Aves were said kneeling as were also the words so often repeated: We adore Thee and offer Thee our reparation through the immaculate heart of Thy most holy Mother.

Can we doubt but that the Heart of Jesus was consoled at least in some measure for the outrages of the wicked, by the sight of these His spouses offering in His presence the incense of their hearts and of their prayers?

When the community left the choir two sisters remained in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. They began by making an act of reparation, prostrate and with their cords around their necks. They then said together one of the shorter hours of the Office of Reparation, and spent the rest of the time in silent prayer and meditation. At the end of an hour they were replaced by two other sisters who performed the same devotions; and this went on until five o'clock in the evening, interrupted only by the canonical hours and other community exercises. At five o'clock Vespers and Compline of the Office of Reparation were said in common in the choir, in the same solemn manner in which Matins had been said. Then followed the act of consecration, and the *Te Deum* completed the exercises of this day consecrated to the Sacred Heart.

Mother M. Veronica rejoiced over the fervor which the sisters showed for these exercises of reparation and the deep and touching impression they made upon all. At the end of an enthusiastic account which she wrote to Mother M. Theresa, she adds: "This was for me the most beauti-

ful day of the whole year and all our sisters say the same; henceforth the first Friday shall always be a holyday for us and shall be passed with the same devotions." She sent her a number of copies of the Office of Reparation and this practice was also introduced into the monastery at Cleveland.

But Mother M. Veronica valued a firm and lively faith united with ardent charity far more than all exterior devotions and marks of reverence; without the former, these are but an empty shell. In all her instructions and conversations she endeavored to inflame the hearts of her subjects with true devotion. When she spoke of the love and goodness of God in the Blessed Sacrament, and the ineffable grace of being a spouse of our divine Lord, she could not control her emotion and her tears made more impression on her listeners than did her inflamed words. When receiving Holy Communion she seemed neither to see nor to hear what went on about her, and the tears which streamed from her eyes bore witness to the love which burned within her heart.

Once when a sister asked her what she did after Holy Communion, she answered, "First I adore Jesus as my Lord and my God, as my crucified Redeemer, as my only Benefactor; and then I ask Him for many graces. But first I give our dear Lord something: I renew my good resolutions at His Feet." To the question, what graces she asked of Him she replied: "The first grace which I ask is to know God in order to love Him, and to know myself in order to despise myself. The second grace is an entire detachment from the world and all creatures, especially from myself."

CHAPTER XXII

HER HUMILITY AND OTHER VIRTUES.

No one can make progress in virtue without the assistance of God and this is obtained only by fervent prayer. From early childhood Mother M. Veronica had loved and practiced prayer; to be able to lead a life of prayer she had entered a contemplative Order, and in it she had never desired anything else than to be able to converse with God unknown and unnoticed by all. Although this ardent desire underwent a rude trial amid her many occupations and, later, amid the duties of her responsible office, it was by no means weakened, but was rather enkindled the more, and she was most happy at that time when, being relieved of her office, she could lead a more quiet and solitary life and was thus enabled the better to follow the longings of her heart. But even in the midst of the most varied occupations and duties, she knew how to preserve the spirit of prayer by frequently calling to mind the presence of God, and she did everything with that unalterable tranquility and patience which is peculiar to souls intimately united with God.

She had a great preference for the use of aspirations and she knew how to adapt them to her needs. Regarding the ejaculation: My Jesus, mercy! She told a sister that she made use of it in the following manner: First, *My* Jesus, mercy! He is all *mine* and I am all His. Second, My *Jesus,* mercy! He is my *Jesus,* my God, my All. Third,

My Jesus, *mercy!* I, poor miserable sinner, need but one thing—*mercy!* "The more we emphasis these words," she said, "the more fervent will be our prayer." She loved also to repeat the following: "O, my God, I have all from Thee; O, my God, I offer and consecrate all to Thee! O, my God, in Thee do I seek and find all; O, my God, Thou art all to me!"

Often she chose as the subject of her instructions the presence of God, and so absorbed did she become in this that she forgot the time, place and even her listeners. It happened repeatedly that she was so overpowered by her interior emotion that she could not utter another word and was obliged to pause until she had collected herself and dried her tears.

She was so penetrated with the thought of the presence of God, that all she saw reminded her of Him and moved her to His praise. When, in spring, nature again put on her robe of green, she acknowledged in this the hand of the beneficent Creator, and every leaf, every blossom spoke to her of His power and love. On one occasion, a sister whose duty it was to wash off the tables in the refectory, had done this rather hastily and carelessly. Mother M. Veronica called to her; expecting a reprimand, she obeyed somewhat timidly, but the good mother's thoughts were with God, she had not noticed the tables. Pointing to a tiny insect which was creeping about, she said: "See how wonderfully God has created all things. This little insect is so small that we can hardly see it with the naked eye, and yet it has received from Him all its members and organs of sense; the little eyes, the tiny feet, minute digestive organs, etc." And she

exhorted the sister to the praise of God and admiration of His greatness.

Whatever sorrows or difficulties the sisters might confide to her, she knew how to refer all to God, saying that nothing happens without His will and permission, and how wonderfully He orders all for our good. Constantly she placed before their eyes our divine Savior as their model, what He did and suffered for them, to encourage them to bear their daily crosses willingly and patiently. One of her sisters gives Mother M. Veronica the following beautiful testimony in this regard. "Rarely did she speak to her subjects without saying something of God and divine things, so accustomed was she to refer all things to Him. The slightest acquaintance with her sufficed to convince one, that her habitual practice of the presence of God was the source from which flowed that silent joy and gentle patience which never left her. Never did a cloud darken the mild sunshine of her face; no haste, no fear and even no exaggerated zeal ever disturbed her peace."

All who have any experience of the interior life know that souls who possess the spirit of prayer, have also true humility of heart. How, indeed, could one entertain or allow to arise even the least spark of pride in the presence of the infinite God, before Whom all creatures are but as a drop of water falling to the earth, Who with a single act of His will could annihilate them all and cast all sinners into the depths of hell? Or is it possible that a soul who lovingly contemplates the sufferings of Christ, and who sees Him, the Son of God, cast to the ground, trodden under foot, spit upon, buffeted and fastened to an infamous gibbet could still nourish thoughts of vanity? If in time of temp-

tation or in hours when through human weakness her intercourse with God is interrupted, that pride which will cling to every child of Adam, shows that it is not dead within her, when she returns to prayer, it is precisely the knowledge of this pride, which by experience she now realizes is wound around her very heart that humbles her most deeply and covers her with confusion and repentance. But when God further grants to a soul that *sense* of His near presence within her, or when by interior trials He reveals to the loving soul the depths of her misery, then not only does pride disappear, but on the contrary, it requires a good deal of courage to endure oneself and not to be crushed by the weight of the terrible majesty of God and not to fall into despair at the sight of one's own wickedness and helplessness. Therefore, we must not be surprised that in Mother M. Veronica contempt of self grew in proportion to the growth of the spirit of prayer within her. In consequence of this purifying light a hot combat ensued within her soul between humility and love. Her burning love of God strove, by ever new acts of love and spiritual communions, for an ever more intimate union with its Object, while her contempt of self went so far as to cause her to believe herself to be in a state of mortal sin, in which acts of love appeared to her to border on irreverence and she feared to commit a sacrilege in every Holy Communion. Inexpressible were the sufferings she endured in this state; only obedience was able to procure for her during short intervals help and relief.

This painful purification, as well as her unselfishness and entire forgetfulness of self, the patience and resignation with which she bore all sufferings and trials as a well

deserved punishment, and the constant sorrow for her faults, are evident proofs that the exterior acts of humility and self-abasement which she practiced in word and deed, had their source in her innermost heart. It was the sense of her unworthiness and misery which urged her to humble herself beneath the feet of all, and she greedily grasped the occasions which came in her way actually to do so. Often the sisters found her lying prostrate at the door of the choir or refectory, that they might be obliged to step over her in order to pass.

Finding herself so often disturbed by sisters who wished to speak to her during the general retreat, that she could not give to it the necessary attention, Mother M. Veronica, with the consent of her confessor, made a private retreat at another time of the year. Then it seemed as if she wished to make up for all the acts of humility which, on account of her office, she had not been able to perform during the year. Like a criminal, her veil removed (as she thought herself unworthy of this symbol of a spouse of Christ), with a cord around her neck, she knelt in the refectory before each sister in turn and said, "Dear sister, I humbly beg you to pray for me that I may correct my many and great faults," or she would add, "that I may amend my life and keep my resolutions." Her subjects were so moved that they could not restrain their tears, and dreaded these times in advance. Once when a postulant who had never seen anything of the kind before, could not reconcile herself to having her superior so humble herself before her, and weeping aloud, begged her to desist, the aged vicaress tried to prepare the sisters for these heartrending occurrences. "Children," she said, "do not get frightened. I

tried my best to dissuade Mother Abbess from doing these things, but I was not successful."

Another one of her public acts of humility was to eat her collation sitting on the floor and without her veil. For a least fault she would prostrate in the middle of the choir and ask pardon.

On her namesday or on the anniversary of her profession when the sisters gave her particular marks of veneration, she would not forbid this that she might not spoil their pleasure, but her interior confusion was plainly visible, and sometimes she could not refrain from remarking: "No, no, not to me, but to our dear Lord, Who sacrificed Himself for us, is this due." On the occasion of an anniversary of her profession, Mother M. Josepha ordered the Magnificat to be sung; Mother M. Veronica, amid a torrent of tears, remained prostrate before the altar until the singing was ended.

Nothing was so painful to her as to hear herself praised. A nun belonging to another community once told her how highly she was esteemed among the members of that community, but she immediately realized that this was very distasteful to Mother M. Veronica. Soon after this she called attention to a rule which forbids the sisters to praise each other.

She was never heard to speak advantageously of herself or her relatives. Once, when for the sake of edification she related something of her deceased mother, she afterwards regretted it and asked pardon of her listeners.

Interesting articles concerning the Poor Clares sometimes appeared in the papers, but before Mother Veronica would let the sisters see these, she would so completely erase

EXTERIOR CHAPEL AT CHICAGO.

all that related to her secular name and rank in the world, that it could not be deciphered.

So low was the opinion she had of herself that, notstanding her great zeal in striving for perfection, she could never discover anything virtuous in herself. What others admired in her seemed to her something purely natural, or else mingled with so much imperfection, that it ought to be considered a fault rather than a virtue. With regard to her faults, however, matters were quite different. In her eyes these ordinarily appeared enormous; in the most humble manner she accused herself of them, and mourned over them as if they were great crimes. When she began to speak of her "frivolity, her wickedness and tepidity," tears streamed from her eyes and she was hardly able to go on.

Her own deep self-knowledge gave her a keen insight into any lack of humility in the hearts of those who entrusted themselves to her guidance. She recognized in them the smallest faults against this virtue and frankly called attention to them. Nor did she spare them the occasions of humbling themselves and allowing themselves to be humbled by others, but rather exhorted them to profit by these occasions. If others wished to justify themselves when accused or corrected, she would say, "Oh, see the beautiful violets you might have gathered." Or again, "Why did you let those pearls drop from your heavenly crown?"

When it chanced that a sister, thinking she had been wronged by another, came to Mother M. Veronica saying that the other should make amends, "Now be wise and do not throw away the treasure which is offered to you!" would be the answer. "Draw profit from this, lose no time!

Go quickly and *yourself* ask pardon, then you will have a double gain." She herself acted in this way. She frequently knelt down and most humbly asked pardon of subjects whom she had corrected, and who showed that they felt the correction to have been too severe.

She was so far removed from all ambition that it was a torture to her to be placed above others. Had she not had such great interest in and love for her community, and had she not recognized the will of God in the matter, nothing could have induced her to take upon herself the government of a community even for a short time. In her conviction of her entire unworthiness and incapacity, she endeavored by every means in her power to be released from her office. She wrote the most touching letters, urged numberless arguments and tried by all possible means to gain her end. Her whole aim was to promote the glory of God and do good to others; herself she forgot entirely.

The same pure love of God, which, nourished and enflamed by a life of prayer, produced in Mother M. Veronica this perfect humility and contempt of self, was also the source of that extraordinary charity which we have already admired in her, and which became more and more all-embracing, ardent and tender the nearer she approached the end of her life. She rejoiced with the joyful and was sad with the sorrowful. Yes, so heartfelt was her joy at the good of others, that the possessor of it could not rejoice more. In like manner the sufferings of others were her own sufferings. It became necessary even to use some caution in making these known to her, not to cause her too great pain. Day and night she watched over the needs of the community in general, as well as of those of the indi-

vidual members. After the sisters had retired to rest she still went about trying to espy an opportunity of rendering a service of charity. She many times found excuses for depriving herself of certain articles of food that there might be more for others, especially if there was anyone who was not feeling well. In numberless other ways she robbed herself for the sake of others. Her love and solicitude for the sick became ever more tender, and this showed itself in her extreme care not to let them know they caused any trouble or expense. The dispensations also which she felt it best to grant, she gave with a delicate charity, endeavoring by reminding the sisters of obedience, humility and simplicity to make it more easy for them to accept these. "By these virtues," she would say, "you can please our dear Lord more than you could by fasting and performing other works of penance suggested by your own will."

We have already spoken of Mother M. Veronica's charity towards those in interior affliction. But it cost many a sacrifice amid the multiplicity of her duties, to so give up her time to them, and many hours of rest did she lose because of being thereby obliged to make up necessary work.

She once betrayed to one of her subjects the secret of her zeal for all works of charity. Knowing that this sister was not well, she went to her after Matins to inquire if she needed anything. The sister, thanking her, replied in the negative. "Oh, I am sorry that I cannot do anything for you," said Mother M. Veronica, "for our dear Lord says: Whatsoever you have done to the least of My brethren you have done to Me." Revealing by these words that it was her divine Master Whom she served in her neighbor.

It was her patience and unselfishness particularly which attracted all hearts to her and made her work so efficacious. Whenever possible she yielded to the wishes of others, willingly giving up her own opinion when it was contradicted. She never took anything amiss, never harbored bad feelings against anyone, she tried to cover all with the mantle of charity and pardoned from her whole heart all wrongs and injuries done her. All this she did in so natural and charitable a manner that no one could suspect the self-denial it cost her. Once when told that she was too mild and indulgent she replied: "When I arrive up above if the Lord says to me, 'You were too severe,' then I shall be obliged to say 'mea culpa' and be silent. But if He says, 'You were too good,' then I can reply, 'You also were so good towards me, my dear Savior, it was You Yourself Who set me the example'—and then He can say no more."

Mother M. Veronica was always exceedingly charitable in her judgment of others. For every failing of her neighbor she found some excuse. "Oh! children," she sometimes said to the extern sisters, when they spoke to her of scandals which happened in the world, "perhaps this was not done with so bad an intention. God alone can see into the heart. We will judge no one, then the hour of our death will be an easy one, and our divine Savior will be a merciful judge to us." She always took the part of the absent, and if she could not excuse an action, she would say to the one who complained of it: "God permits this to give you an occasion to practice virtue. Make a faithful use of this great grace which God in His mercy sends you, and do not let this precious pearl slip from your grasp."

Even when her confidence was abused thus causing her

great sorrow, she would not allow anything to be said against the offender and as long as duty did not oblige her to speak, she also observed perfect silence in the matter, or she tried to excuse the guilty one. The sisters were not even allowed to pass unfavorable judgments upon tramps, although it was a well-known fact that it was often not food they wanted, but rather to get into the house and thus become acquainted with the arrangement of doors and windows. As a precaution Mother M. Veronica later on had a little room constructed for them near the entrance and so arranged that they could not get into the interior of the house; but no one was allowed to say anything against them. Often these beggars were not satisfied with the food given them and wanted money, for which reason the sisters mistrusted them and warned Mother M. Veronica. But she replied: "Oh, you must not say this! We ought not to think such a thing!" The sisters sometimes remarked with a smile: "The whole world might cheat our mother and she would still excuse it."

As far as was compatible with the strict poverty which she had vowed, she tried to help all in need. She sometimes had poor persons sought out and the necessities of life sent to them. Once when she heard of an unknown priest who had been buried in a part of the cemetery set apart for the poor, she wished to have the body disinterred and buried in an honorable place and a cross erected over the grave. But before she could take steps in the matter friends appeared who took charge of the body.

When her subjects did not seem satisfied with a thing because it was too old, too much worn or almost unfit for use, Mother M. Veronica would frequently offer to take it

herself, which was far more humiliating than the severest rebuke would have been. At meals also, when some article of food seemed unsatisfactory to the one to whom it was given, in a moment it was on her plate. This, however, was not always done to inflict a humiliating penance upon the sister, but ordinarily through solicitude for her health.

On one occasion a keg of salted herring had been donated. After some time Mother M. Veronica perceived that these were beginning to decay, so she would not have them served to the community, but she herself for many weeks ate of the herring every day, notwithstanding the remonstrances of all the sisters. It was with great difficulty and after much urging that she could finally be brought to yield to the entreaties of the vicaress to allow the decaying fish to be removed. She always thought that for her anything was good enough and that her healthy stomach could stand any kind of food.

Although it might seem that during the last years of her life, Mother M. Veronica's charity was somewhat lacking in prudence and firmness, in reality this was not the case. When duty required it she could proceed with a sharp judgment and great decision, as was repeatedly seen when she sent away candidates who were unfit for the religious life, and when obliged to correct or punish one of her subjects. Only the tears which flowed from her eyes on such occasions betrayed her compassion and interior pain.

She also did not hestitate to keep away persons and even her sisters when, without special need, they robbed her of valuable time. One of the nuns remarks on this sub-

ject: "When I was in too great a hurry to tell our good mother my troubles, she pretended not to see me and continued her writing, and when I had said all, she would look up and ask, as if I had just entered the room, 'Well, what is it?'" In this same way she treated many others, and frequently a card was found pinned to her door, which gave notice that she was not to be seen. Externs who had no urgent motive for speaking to her were not admitted into her presence. Only in this way was it possible for her to get the time to attend to her manifold duties.

CHAPTER XXIII

MOTHER VERONICA'S VISIT TO CLEVELAND.

Contrary to all expectations Mother M. Theresa since the beginning of the foundation at Chicago had enjoyed the best of health and had been able to take part in all the community exercises. God had answered the many prayers offered for her and had thus rewarded the confidence placed in Him in undertaking the new foundation. But in the spring of 1898, Mother M. Theresa was attacked by a throat trouble, which was declared serious by some physicians. One may imagine Mother M. Veronica's anxiety concerning patient. "There we have it," she said, "did I not predict that it would happen this way?"

When Mother M. Theresa wrote saying that the doctor had forbidden her to use her voice at all and that she felt quite unable to fulfil the duties of her office, and begged Mother M. Veronica to come and take her place in the community for some time, the good mother could be detained at home no longer. With permission of the Most Reverend Archbishop she started for Cleveland, accompanied by an extern sister.

This was on October 14. On the following morning they arrived at Cleveland, where they found some of the extern sisters with a carriage waiting to take them to their old monastery. With mingled feelings of deep emotion Mother M. Veronica again greeted our divine Lord in the little chapel, the preparation of which had once been to her

so dear a labor of love, and where she had received so many and so great graces.

How the good extern sisters rejoiced to have their dear mother with them again! They would not let her leave them until they had prepared breakfast for her, but after breakfast they could not keep her longer, for Mother M. Theresa and all the choir sisters were waiting at the enclosure door to receive her with due solemnity. As soon as the door opened Mother M. Veronica knelt down to ask the blessing of her former spiritual daughter, while Mother M. Theresa also knelt to beg that of her mother. At first neither would yield, but finally they agreed each to bless the other, for both needed the blessing of God.

A line of march was formed and the Reverend Mother was led to the choir during the singing of the *Magnificat*. After a few moments spent in prayer she was conducted to the inner parlor where a seat of honor had been prepared for her. Arrived here she was greeted with the welcome hymn which had been composed for the occasion by one of the sisters. Addresses and poems in German and English followed.

After this the way was led to the chapter room where the "bishop's chair" had been placed for the honored guest beside a little improvised altar erected in honor of St. Theresa, whose feast the church celebrates on this day. Now all crowded around begging her to tell them all about the sisters at Chicago. So Mother M. Veronica began in the sweet way so familiar to them all; she spoke of the old and young members of the new community and of the spiritual and temporal blessings God had bestowed upon it. Once, however, her eyes filled with tears, she had left a

young sister at home who was ill and for whom the fear was entertained that her lungs were affected. At the mother's departure she had said, "I shall be the cause of your being obliged to return soon." The sisters tried to console her and indeed asked so many questions that she could hardly find time to answer them all.

Some American postulants who were listening to the conversation without being able to understand it, meanwhile passed remarks about her: "What a beautiful, sympathetic face she has!" "How sweet and good she looks, just like a real mother!" "She looks like a saint, etc."

During her stay in Cleveland Mother M. Veronica occupied her old cell and also the little office, where for so many years she had listened to, advised and consoled her sisters and carried on the correspondence of the house.

On the morning after her arrival when the bell rang for work, she was the first to make her appearance in the kitchen ready to clean the vegetables for dinner. But Mother Theresa soon came and bore her away.

On every occasion she tried to show that she considered herself a subject, and that she wished to help with all the common work. Only to relieve Mother M. Theresa of the duty of serving the sisters at table, could she be prevailed upon to take her place in the refectory, but she always remarked that she had nothing to say there. She desired very much to take part in the penances which are performed in the refectory, which Mother M. Theresa would not grant her as the honored guest of the community. But when Mother M. Theresa, kneeling before her, once asked for such a penance, she said aloud that all the sisters might hear, "Your penance shall be to impose a penance on me."

Obedient, but with a roguish smile upon her face, Mother M. Theresa immediately took her place at table while Mother M. Veronica went to kneel before her and made her request. Mother M. Theresa answered: "Your penance shall be to take your seat immediately." She realized now that her beautiful days as a subject at Cleveland were past forever and she submitted to the inevitable.

The sisters soon saw that Mother M. Veronica was still the same good mother of former years, full of charity and solicitude for all. Examples similar to those already cited were numerous. She could not refrain from going in person with little dishes to those who were not feeling well (there was no one actually sick in the community at that time). But as Mother M. Theresa took care that she got the full time for her night's rest, she did not suffer from sleepiness during the daytime.

Never could she suffer the sisters to impose sacrifices upon themselves on her account, and if sometimes she remarked it too late, she would humbly ask their pardon.

She sought and found a good specialist for Mother M. Theresa, who undertook to treat her free of charge two or three times a week, assuring her that the malady would soon be cured. As soon as the weather became cold, the two mothers took up their abode in the infirmary, Mother M. Theresa on account of her throat and Mother M. Veronica to be able to keep an eye upon her.

One day the portress announced the visit of a gentleman who insisted upon seeing the superior. Mother M. Theresa begged Mother M. Veronica to go to the parlor in her stead, warning her not to have much to do with the

stranger should he prove to be an agent or commercial traveler. After a long time Mother M. Veronica returned saying the man was a professor who gave instructions in different useful arts, for which reason she had thought she would not be acting contrary to her wish in allowing him to return in the afternoon to show some samples of his work. The result was that for a comparatively large sum of money, several sisters received instructions from the "professor" and a lady who accompanied him, in casting statues, painting, pressed leather work, etc. At which instructions the two mothers were present, Mother M. Veronica wishing to improve the opportunity to learn these arts that she might teach them to her sisters at Chicago.

The "professor" seemed to be a pious Catholic, who had a special esteem for contemplative Orders in several houses of which he said he had given lessons. The young woman who accompanied him, although a Protestant, spoke of joining the church and entering a religious community as one of her friends had done. In order to gain time the strangers took their dinners and suppers in one of the outer reception rooms. As a variety of material necessary for the work had to be purchased, the "professor" offered to attend to this; soon, however, he said that certain stores would not give him credit, and that he would need a written permit from the convent. To help him out of the difficulty this was given him.

Meanwhile some of the nuns had begun to entertain suspicions which they told to Mother M. Veronica, but she in the goodness and conscientiousness of her heart, answered that they must entirely banish such uncharitable

thoughts. To one of them she said: "How can you judge so uncharitably of the man? He has a heart of gold." But what was the dismay of the Poor Clares and of several other communities who had allowed themselves to be duped by the "professor," when they heard that he had left the city taking with him many articles which he had purchased on the name of these communities.

Mother M. Veronica's charity even now remained invincible; when a sister remarked that she would pray that "the old scamp" might be arrested, she replied: "Yes, but only that he might be converted and may not do harm to others." While the sisters gave vent to their indignation against the dishonesty and hypocrisy of the man and his assistant and a merchant came to the convent with his bills, the good mother had only words of compassion for the two unhappy criminals and said, "We must pray for their conversion."

During her stay in Cleveland, Mother M. Veronica did not forget her beloved children at Chicago. Aside from the correspondence which the affairs of her community made necessary, she wrote to each sister a long and edifying letter. Although all these letters are full of the most beautiful instructions, we give but a part of each of two of them, one of which was addressed to a young professed novice who was about to make her perpetual vows.

"You particularly, my beloved child, now have need of the assistance of divine grace, as the most beautiful day of your life, the one most replete with graces is drawing near. Only a few months and the divine Savior will renew, confirm and seal for all eternity the covenant of love which He made with you three years ago. O holy perpetual vows!

What a grace, what condescension towards a poor, frail, little worm of the earth! He Whom the glorious hosts of angels in profoundest adoration worship as their God, so lowers Himself as to accept a little worm of the earth, a sinful little worm of the earth, for His spouse. What a wonderful fire of love must burn in the Heart of Jesus that He should wish to do so great things for you! But what a fire of love should also glow in your heart towards Jesus! If you feel that you have not for Him this ardent, self-sacrificing, faithful love, then do at least the following: First, often ask Him for this love and tell Him that you desire to love Him as much as our holy mother St. Clare, as the seraphim, as the immaculate heart of Mary loves Him. Such petitions and such desires are very pleasing to Him and increase our love for Jesus. Second, humble yourself on account of your little love for Him, and your want of true virtue. Practice zealously interior and exterior acts of humility. Interior humility by often confessing to our dear Savior your many faults, your negligences, your inconstancy and whatever all this spiritual misery may be. Ask pardon of Him and beg Him to come to your assistance. Exterior humility by behaving toward everyone as it becomes the least, the most imperfect of all; for everyone who wishes to advance in virtue must have a low opinion of herself, and if she has not such an opinion of herself, this alone is sufficient reason to humble herself *profoundly*. Further, accept willingly and joyfully the daily occasions of humility, with gratitude towards those who help you thereto by corrections, etc. Also, yield to others wherever possible; render them little services, always taking the last place, because it belongs to us by right. By the

practice of humility we in part make up for our want of virtue and love of God and by it God is moved to give us graces to help us to advance. Third, be very careful not to commit any *voluntary* fault. This is most important. Unfaithfulness in our duties and to the inspirations of God interrupts the chain of grace. But every act of fidelity increases grace and love of God in our souls. Fourth, make a zealous use of the time of prayer, and often during the day raise your heart to God. From Him you must seek grace and light to overcome your faults and to make progress in virtue.

"And then have a childlike confidence in the power and goodness of Jesus and the material aid of the Blessed Virgin. Never lose courage on account of your faults, but humble yourself all the more. To be discouraged and dejected after committing a fault is no sign of an humble soul and often hurts us more than the fault itself.

"And now go to work with joyous resolution and humble confidence in God. Jesus and Mary will help you if by prayer and interior recollection you keep yourself closely united with them * * * "

To another young nun: "I am glad to hear that in my absence you are getting along so well and that you are so cheerful. That is right; God loves a cheerful giver and cheerfulnesss is a very good means by which to perform all our duties well and to grow in virtue.

"And, indeed, who has more reason to be cheerful than a Poor Clare, upon whom God so lavishly bestows His graces? A Poor Clare may justly call herself a beloved one of the Heart of Jesus. Among millions of other souls He fixed the eyes of His mercy upon her, He drew

her from the dangers of the world, placed her in His own house and guards her in it by holy enclosure that the wickedness, the vanity and the distractions of the world may not reach her. And here He works upon her soul by His graces, His holy inspirations, exhortations, corrections and encouragements of His representatives, that she may more and more correct her faults, and by faithful and zealous imitation of His holy life become like unto Him. More like unto Him than those many thousand souls who do not understand at all, or at least do not understand in the same measure, the treasure of evangelical poverty, the security and happiness of holy obedience and the marvelous beauty of virginal purity. O how happy are you, dear child, to belong to the little favorite band of our divine Savior! Endeavor to prove your gratitude for so exceptional a grace by trying to be a very good, humble and docile little lamb of the faithful Shepherd of your soul. Keep very near to Him by interior recollection and by generous obedience to the inspirations of grace, and He will draw you nearer and nearer to Himself, and give you a peace which the world does not know and which is a foretaste of the eternal peace of our heavenly home. The more faithful and generous you are towards Jesus the more generous He will be towards you * * * "

Although Mother M. Veronica, in obedience to the holy Rule and in a spirit of detachment, was very sparing of her letters to her family, she nevertheless hastened to console them in the most loving manner, whenever she learned that they were visited by any trial. As about this time her brother was suffering from a long and painful illness, she wrote, among other things, the following beautiful exhorta-

tions to patience which contain counsels calculated to lead one to the highest perfection.

"Upon the degree of our patience depends the degree of our reward. It is a great mercy of God when He sends suffering, because we can thereby more easily and with great merit atone for the punishment due to sin. The late abbess of the convent of Poor Clares at Dusseldorf prayed for the grace to suffer her purgatory here upon earth.

"But it is still more noble and meritorious to suffer through grateful love of God, for example, because God has bestowed upon me so many benefits and I can thereby prove to Him my love and gratitude; because my Savior has suffered so much for me, more, far more than was sufficient for my redemption, and because He, urged by His divine love, could not rest satisfied until He had given me the grandest proofs of it; because it is right that not only my most innocent Savior should suffer but also I, most guilty sinner; because I wish to give Him love for love and suffering for suffering; because I wish to resemble Him Who was the Man of Sorrows, that I who, alas, do not resemble Him by sanctity may at least resemble Him by suffering. The more I shall resemble Him here below, the greater will also be my resemblance to Him in eternal glory and beatitude.

"It is most profitable for our souls and most pleasing to God, if we make acts of perfect resignation and conformity with the divine will, for example: O, my God, not as I will, but as Thou wilt. Lord do with me as Thou wilt and knowest, I know that Thou art love. O, my Savior, I wish to suffer whatsoever Thou wilt. Even though I were to expect no reward for it, I would wish nevertheless

to suffer willingly all that Thou shalt send. O my crucified Jesus, all for purest love of Thee! O, my Savior, if it were in my power to free myself from all suffering in opposition to Thy will, I would not do so, even though it could be done without sin. O, my dearest Savior, Who didst suffer, with so much love, such great pain for me upon the cross, I thank Thee for my sufferings. O, my crucified Savior, I know that Thou lovest me unspeakably and that Thou dost send me this suffering from purest love. O, my God, I wish to make all these acts with my whole heart, but as on account of my weakness I am unable to do so, I pray Thee to accept the will for the deed."

Under Mother M. Veronica's tender care, Mother M. Theresa was rapidly recovering, and they were entertaining plans for undertaking or completing together several important works for the benefit of the two communities, when a telegram from Mother M. Josepha suddenly called Mother M. Veronica away. The state of health of the sister before mentioned had become alarming. Before Mother M. Veronica's departure, the sisters still hoped that the disease might be only catarrh, but now when making a thorough examination, the doctor had discovered a large cavity in the lungs. No time was to be lost if the life of the patient was to be saved. There was question of applying a newly discovered method of cure, which the vicaress would not decide in the absence of the abbess.

Much as Mother M. Veronica would have liked to remain at Cleveland, she saw that here a serious duty recalled her to her community. She therefore departed on the evening of the same day, with the extern sister who had accom-

panied her. Great was the grief of all at her departure. The choir sisters conducted her to the enclosure door and all the extern sisters who could get away drove with her to the depot.

CHAPTER XXIV

FIRST LOSSES BY DEATH.

Only those who knew the love of the sisters at Chicago for their mother could appreciate what it cost them willingly to allow her to go to Cleveland, and the joy they felt at her return. But this joy was not without its mixture of sorrow because of the sad circumstances which had called her home, and the thought of this caused Mother M. Veronica to shed many tears as she approached the monastery.

Immediately after her arrival she called in several physicians for a consultation. The result of this was that a certain new treatment was applied in the hope that it would prove effectual. But it lay in the designs of God to take to Himself this promising religious in the bloom of youth and in her first fervor.

For a short time there was an improvement and on February 24, 1898, she was admitted to perpetual vows. But notwithstanding all the care bestowed upon the patient, a trifle was sufficient to increase the malady and finally all were convinced that no help was to be expected from human skill.

Mother M. Veronica's heart bled at the thought of the impending loss. Sister M. Clare was the first little plant of the new foundation at Chicago and was distinguished for her talents and education as well as for virtue and piety. Her desire for perfection was very great. She truly wished to be a saint and showed by her whole conduct how earnest

was her desire. As if she knew that she had but a short time for work, she most conscientiously employed every moment. Her maxim was that we should *live* as if we were to die immediately, and *work* as if we were to live always. Even during recreation she was never idle and never lost a moment in useless talk or in aimlessly standing about.

In her love of holy poverty the commonest things pleased her best and anything was good enough for her. If something better was offered, she modestly declined, provided the article she had was at all fit for use.

She humbly accused herself of every fault she committed and had a great desire for humiliations. Praise on the contrary was very repugnant to her and she carefully avoided speaking of the honorable position she had held in the world, although in spite of herself her bearing sometimes betrayed that she was accustomed to command.

On hearing a sister sigh over her work she once remarked, "You are sighing because of my sins, are you not?" Doubtless she just then had them before her eyes and was humbling herself for them in the interior of her heart, although after her death her confessor could affirm that she never lost her baptismal innocence.

In a spirit of faith she always looked upon her superiors as the representatives of God and her sisters as spouses of Christ, and for all without distinction she entertained a great esteem. No sacrifice which obedience or charity demanded was too great. As she was very skillful in all sorts of work, she often had occasion of proving her spirit of sacrifice, especially during the building of the last wings of the monastery. It was hard for her to be dis-

pensed on this account from the exercises in the choir, for her greatest happiness was in prayer. On days when the Blessed Sacrament was exposed she spent as much time as possible at the feet of her divine Spouse, sometimes even eleven or twelve hours. She would on other occasions kneel for a long time before a rude little altar or crib entirely lost in contemplation of the mystery represented.

Sister M. Clare was as zealous in the practice of mortification as in that of prayer, especially in the custody of the eyes. In the refectory and wherever the community was assembled she always kept them cast down; when she passed through the corridors her modesty and recollected appearance were a mute sermon.

Upon her rested Mother M. Veronica's hopes for the future, and she had already begun to entertain the thought of proposing this sister to the community for the office of abbess as soon as she should have reached the canonical age, that she, being freed from her office might give herself up more entirely to prayer. Sister M. Clare had indeed a great love for her holy vocation and a deep understanding of the holy Rule and of the religious life in general.

When the physicians had given up all hope of a cure, the sisters stormed heaven; they made novena after novena, and hoped, particularly as the patient herself showed such great confidence, that God, through the intercesssion of our Lady of Pompeii, would cure her.

Sister M. Clare herself wished to continue her religious life at the side of her good mother, to reach here below the perfection for which she longed and to appear before her divine Spouse adorned with far greater virtues and merits; but He was satisfied with her good desire and earnest will,

with the efforts she had made and the combats she had hitherto sustained in the battle to attain the sublime end of her vocation.

She strove courageously to overcome her increasing weakness and to help her beloved mother in her manifold occupations, in the drawing of plans for the completion of the monastery, the copying of important documents and other manuscrips, but finally the increasing fever made further work impossible.

Henceforth she occupied herself with God alone and with the good of her soul. With greatest devotion she received the last sacraments in presence of the whole community, asked pardon of all and requested the different sisters to come to her singly that she might take leave of each.

Shortly before her death she gave to the sisters of the novitiate an exhortation on candor and openness towards superiors, because she felt from her own experience how important this is for one's own progress as well as for the welfare of the whole community. Mother M. Veronica not only visited the patient frequently but took an active part in nursing her both by day and by night.

But despite all that could be done for her she grew gradually weaker, the oppression and difficulty in breathing steadily increased, until March 8, 1900, after a night spent in conversing with the Infant Jesus in her simple way, preparing to receive Him in Holy Communion on the following morning, she succumbed quite unexpectedly to a coughing spell which began during Mass, and died in the arms of Mother M. Veronica who had been summoned in great haste by the infirmarian, just as the priest with the Blessed

Sacrament followed by the sisters entered the room. The Divine Infant had come to take her to His eternal dwellings.

In the decrees of Divine Providence the first postulant of the community was also to be the first to be interred in the new cemetery, which by a permit from the city granted in 1897, the community was allowed to have within the convent grounds.

Three of her brothers, one as officiating priest, the other two as servers, were present at the burial services. It was most touching to see one of them bending over the beloved corpse sobbing aloud and kissing her farewell, while the priest cast a shovelful of earth upon the coffin after it had been lowered into the grave.

The first mound in the new cemetery was still fresh when another flower in the garden of St. Clare at Chicago began to droop. It was the young Sister Mary Antonie, who had made her first vows on February 23, 1901. From early childhood she had been remarkable for unusual piety and love for the poor, although her early education was anything but a preparation for the austerities of the life of a Poor Clare, growing up as she did in the midst of the comforts and pleasures of the world. But all this could not satisfy a soul whom the divine Bridegroom had chosen for His own. A feeling of mortal disgust took possession of her and her longing for an austere and perfect life daily increased. As soon as she heard of the Poor Clares and their mode of life she felt so drawn towards them that her friends exhausted in vain all their powers of persuasion to shake her resolution of entering this Order. Even on the

day of her entrance there took place in the parlor of the monastery a long and hot combat between the love of a mother and a vocation; but the love of God which overcomes all things was victorious.

Although from the beginning, her religious life had been edifying, a decisive epoch began for her when, in a moment of noble enthusiasm for the salvation of an immortal soul, she resolved to lead a life of continual and perfect sacrifice. From this moment she never allowed her nature any satisfaction and endeavored on all occasions to crucify it. In the good faith that a special permission was required only for those works of penance mentioned in ascetical books, she chastised her body in the most terrible manner, believing this merely to be the proper treatment for it. After her death the marks of this were plainly visible, among other things, one of her toes had entirely turned black, for she had, as if by accident, thrown upon it a heavy lump of coal. At table she was not satisfied unless she could get hold of something spoiled, something which had fallen on the floor or been left by others. When obliged to eat of a palatable dish her exertions to repress all natural satisfaction were so great that she could hardly get through with it, and it was easy to read in her face the interior combat which was going on.

Soon nature began to succumb under this harsh treatment. A daily fever set in which would yield to no remedy; the blooming complexion gave way to an alarming pallor, the plump and youthful figure became emaciated even to a skeleton. To this was added catarrh; painful carbuncles formed on different parts of her body and finally the doctors declared her to be in an advanced stage of tuberculosis.

All this brought about no change in Sister M. Antonie's resolution. She cared not at all what happened to her body and gave it only those alleviations which obedience imposed; when its treatment was left to her own discretion, and as long as she felt within herself the least remnant of strength, she was just as merciless towards it as she had been in days of health.

As her stomach was in a deplorable condition, she was often the recipient, through Mother M. Veronica's ingenuous charity, of figs and other little dainties of the kind, with the hope that she might in this way get at least a little nourishment. But after a long time these were found in a niche in the wall. On the other hand she took with alacrity the bitter medicines and pills which last she chewed that she might torture her taste the more. The suffering she thus caused herself was all the greater because of her tongue and lips being covered with ulcers.

Such mortifications cannot indeed be recommended for imitation to ordinary souls, as many of these would thereby be led into the way of perdition rather than that of perfection; but as in the case of Sister M. Antonie they had their origin in her profound humility and self-contempt and were coupled with true charity and simple obedience, and served but to strengthen her in these virtues, we must conclude that God wished in this rude way to purify her in a short time and lead her to great glory.

While acknowledging and treating herself as the most wicked of creatures, she looked upon her sisters as holy and chosen souls and saw heroic virtue in all they did. When a sister was unable to eat at table or to partake of all that was served, she believed her to be observing a strict fast. If on

the contrary one ate heartily, she admired her mortification in taking food which (she thought) was distasteful to her. When a sister looked pale and thin, it was a settled fact with Sister M. Antonie that this resulted from the austerities which she practiced secretly, while if one had a ruddy complexion, it was owing to the fire of divine love.

Once when a sister who had been dyeing veils appeared with her hands all black, she admired her humility, for she imagined that she had blackened her hands on purpose to make herself despised.

When faults had been committed and a reprimand was given for them, she immediately confessed herself guilty, bowing down to the earth and striking her breast with an expression of humility as if she had committed a crime. She wished to be looked upon as igorant and incapable in every way and rejoiced when she succeeded in giving others this opinion of herself, but she carefully concealed everything which might cause her to be honored or esteemed by others.

Her love of God was boundless. Every opportunity, every moment was employed for Him. Wherever she went or stood, while at work and while at rest, her heart was fixed upon Him. And because she could not love her divine Spouse as she wished, she composed a long act of love which she carried over her heart and which she frequently renewed. By this every breath was to be a manifold act of the love of God and her neighbor. Whenever it rained it was her custom to offer every drop to God as an act of love, contrition, etc.; and not satisfied with what she herself could offer Him, she frequently said to others: "Dear sister, do not forget the good intention, it is raining." When

during her illness she stood at the window and saw the first snow falling, she said to the infirmarian who just then entered the room, "O, do ask our dear Lord to accept from me as many acts of love as there are snowflakes falling down." At other times she asked her to offer acts of contrition or to kiss the walls of her cell for her as an act of thanksgiving for the grace of her vocation.

God granted her the grace of a lively realization and fear of the terrors of hell, which enkindled in her a consuming zeal for the salvation of souls, and it is hardly credible how many special prayers she offered every day and how many great penances she imposed upon herself to save souls. She loved above all things the will of God and she endeavored to know and fulfil it even in the smallest matters. The least resistance of nature was at once repressed by an act of loving resignation. During the last weeks of her life she suffered greatly from suffocating spells, and as she feared she might die in one of them she begged of God to spare her this. But when on the day before her death one of these spells reached its height, she cried out in a broken voice, "If it be Thy will, O my God, that I suffocate, Thy will be done! Thy will be done!"

During her whole religious life, Sister M. Antonie had to endure great interior trials, temptations and combats with the evil spirit. As her end drew near these became so extraordinary and alarming, that it seemed as if a demon stood visibly at her side to torment and confound her. Shortly before her death, however, all terrors and sufferings vanished. With great fervor she received the sacraments of the dying, made her perpetual vows and nine days

later, August 1, 1903, gave up her pure soul into the hands of her Creator, after the priest had said the prayers for the dying in presence of all the sisters, and she had once more lovingly embraced and taken leave of each.

Mother M. Veronica and the infirmarian who had been witnesses of her heroic virtue upon her death bed knew better than any one else what a treasure the community had possssed in her. Even to those, who during her life-time had misunderstood her extraordinary virtue and unusual piety and had looked upon them as exaggerations, her perseverance in good and her holy death proved that she had learned in the school of her divine Master that folly of the cross which indeed in the eyes of the world seems worthy of contempt, but which in God's sight is the highest wisdom.

Side by side in the cemetery of the Poor Clares now rested two young, promising sisters, the flowers of their community, whose memory will ever be a spur to the practice of every virtue.

As the angel of death had shown so little regard for age, the sisters asked each other who would be the one to fill the next grave. Little did they suspect how great the next loss would be.

CHAPTER XXV

AN ANSWERED PRAYER.

Three times successively Mother M. Veronica had now been elected abbess and her desire to be freed from the burden and responsibility of superiority and to be able in tranquility and solitude to give herself up to prayer and occupy herself with the salvation of her soul, increased day by day. She reflected as to how this might be accomplished. As she did not dare to shift this heavy burden upon Mother M. Josepha on account of her advanced age and infirm health, she resolved to write to the abbess of a community of Poor Clares in Germany, begging her to send a sister to fill her place. This beautiful and touching letter is a new proof of her great humility. After confessing her incapacity for her office and as a proof of this making an avowal of her faults, she continues: "So now I turn to your sisterly charity, dear mother, with the humble petition to come to our aid for the love of God and our holy father St. Francis and our holy mothers St. Clare and St. Colette, and to send us a sister to govern our community as abbess, for there is no one here to take the place. You will by so doing render us an act of charity so great, so important, so precious that eternity only will suffice to thank you sufficiently for it. But the almighty, ever merciful God, Who has promised mercy to the merciful, will reward you for the sacrifice you make for our community in a befitting manner,—in a divinely liberal manner. Who can tell—perhaps God, for the sake of

this sacrifice, will bless your community with excellent vocations and an extraordinary renewal of the religious spirit.

"Dear mother, I know I am asking for a great, an heroic act of sisterly charity; I would not venture to do so did I not realize that it is so necessary for our community and for my poor soul. I trust in and appeal to your loving heart, to your love for our holy Order and your zeal for the glory of God. I ask it for the sake of that most sublime sacrifice, which the heavenly Father made to us of His only beloved Son, not only to reign over us as our King, but to die for us, a bleeding Victim, upon the Cross. I entreat you through the Blood and Wounds of our Redeemer, through the love of His Sacred Heart. Is it not true, dear mother, you kind heart cannot say *"no"*?

"The good sister whom you send will be received as one sent by God, and we will do all in our power to render the sacrifice easier for her and to make her feel at home among the daughters of St. Clare at Chicago. It shall be my task in particular to lead all hearts to her and to endeavor to be her most humble and obedient daughter.

"Now, beloved mother, I give this letter into the hands of Mary, the Abbess of our monastery, that she may deposit it in the most sweet Heart of Jesus, and that she may also give it to you. May the dear Mother of God be our intercessor with Jesus and with you! Oh, how eternally grateful I shall be to you if you have mercy on my soul! May God enlighten you. We will pray that He may be merciful to us. May He speak to your heart * * * "

The abbess to whom this was addressed replied in a most kind and loving letter, that it would be utterly impossible to grant the desired help, and she stated her reasons

MONASTERY AT WEST PARK, FROM SOUTH SIDE, SHOWING INNER CHOIR AND PART OF ENCLOSURE GARDEN.

so clearly that Mother M. Veronica was obliged to acknowledge that under existing circumstances she was really unable to help her. She now placed her confidence in God alone, Who in His wisdom had decreed to hear her prayers in another way.

When the decisive day came and she made known to the Very Reverend Provincial Hugolinus Storff, O. F. M., who was to preside at the election, her great desire not to resume the office, he yielded and thought that Mother M. Josepha might be able to discharge the duties of abbess if Mother M. Veronica would help her. Like a ray of light these words illumined Mother M. Veronica's soul.

She now undertook to excite the compassion of Mother M. Josepha and of the sisters, and did so with so much persuasiveness that they could not resist her entreaties. To move Mother M. Josepha to undertake the task, she promised to help her in all difficult matters, to take upon herself part of her work, among other things to give the instructions to the sisters, to attend to a large part of the correspondence and to the visits in the parlor, because she knew how much Mother M. Josepha loved solitude and retirement.

Great was her joy when, contrary to all expectations, she saw the accomplishment of her long cherished desire, and she hastened to acquaint everyone with whom she had more intimate intercourse, particularly the Poor Clares at Cleveland, with her great good fortune.

But if the good mother had hoped by this change to be able to lead a life free from care, she had been very much deceived. The divine Master required of her active service

to the end. She still always found the days too short for the fulfilment of her manifold duties, and a great part of the night had to be added thereto. This became ever harder for her, for as time went on she became conscious of a slight decline of her former vigor, and she was more than ever tormented by the drowsiness which persecuted her constantly. But she was so accustomed to be continually at war with nature that she paid no attention to this and with all the energy of her will power tried to fulfill with the greatest perfection all the works and exercises of her new position.

Now, once more, Mother M. Veronica had the opportunity of showing how dearly she loved obedience and how well able she was to practice it. She was accustomed to say that those know best the great adavntages of obedience, who like herself had not always had the happiness of being subjects. And, indeed, it seemed as if she wished amply to indemnify herself for all losses she had sustained in the practice of this virtue during her years of superiority. No novice could have been more zealous in learning and faithfully practicing all that obedience demanded than she was. Not only did she endeavor to be instantly obedient to Mother M. Josepha's words, but she tried to read her wishes from the expression of her face that she might more promptly correspond to them. A word, a sign sufficed to urge her on to the greatest sacrifice. In the smallest things she was just as faithful as in the greatest. Not even a pin would she place in her clothing in another way than was prescribed. For even the least things she sought the permission of her superior. When the sisters, on her namesday or at other times, wished to give her little remembrances, she would say she must first ask permission of

Mother Abbess before she could accept them. She accused herself publicly of even the least negligence or forgetfulness and asked for a penance.

The spirit of faith which governed and penetrated all her works, manifested itself particularly in her conduct towards her superior. Whenever she spoke with her she knelt down and kissed the floor before she arose. When she passed by Mother M. Josepha's cell she bowed reverently. In the evening, when giving the blessing with holy water which was her duty as vicaress, she would kneel down before the abbess and thus give her the holy water.

In the first days after the election it sometimes happened that, forgetting herself, she took her old place at the table. As soon as she became aware of this she manifested the greatest confusion and kissed the floor as a penance for her "fault."

The tone of her voice, her attitude, in short her whole deportment manifested her veneration for her in whom she recognized God's representative in her regard. On every occasion she tried to make the sisters understand that she had nothing to say and that they must turn to Mother M. Josepha to obtain permissions and must obey her in all things.

To look upon herself as the least of all gave her the greatest happiness. When she met younger sisters she reverently stepped aside to let them pass while she bowed profoundly, although custom requires the younger sisters to act thus towards the older members of the community.

Once when she knew that on account of the laundry work only a few sisters could be spared to wash the dishes after dinner, she came in very softly and asked the young

sisters thus employed to tell her what to do. When they looked up in great surprise, she said: "Oh, I am so stupid, you understand what is to be done better than I do." On another occasion a sister surprised her in the act of sweeping the corridors on the upper floor while the others were down stairs washing. She thought she would thus be fulfilling Mother M. Josepha's will, who laid great stress on cleanliness. Most cheerfully would she have taken part in all the work of the house if she could have spared the time for it, and often she spoke of the pleasure this would give her. But ordinarly she remained imprisoned in her room or in the parlor until the last signal for the spiritual exercises was given and even then her work was not finished. Rarely was she able to take the fresh air and she hardly knew the grounds which surrounded the house until the first graves called her out to pray there.

We can readily appreciate what a support such a subject must have been for her superior, and how much she must have been loved and esteemed by her. One thing produced so beautiful a harmony between them that the like is rarely found on earth,—what one desired the other desired also; together they went to the parlor to receive important visits, together they treated of the affairs of the community, together they governed it. It seemed as if they were created for each other and were together but one person. For this reason God's blessing rested upon their works and the divided cares and troubles increased their merit and progress in perfection.

As Mother M. Veronica instructed the sisters in the principles of religious life, they remained, as it were, under her direction, particularly the extern sisters to whom she

devoted herself in an especial manner, and all remarked that her words were now more efficacious and full of unction than ever before. She endeavored particularly to impart to them the same feelings of reverence and submission towards their abbess with which she herself was penetrated, and to lead them to perfect fidelity in the accomplishment of their duties.

Mother M. Veronica was possessed of a wonderful gift of speaking of God and divine things. Like a gentle stream the words of instruction and exhortation flowed from her lips, without exertion and without preparation, and as they came from a heart all inflamed with the love of God and her neighbor, they ever found open hearts ready to receive and follow them. Some of the sisters in all simplicity said that it was a pity their mother was not a priest because of her great gift of speech and her ability to impart peace and consolation.

At about this time the Poor Clares of Omaha, Nebraska, decided to have their monastery, which on account of excavations made in grading the street was lying altogether too high, pulled down, and after grading down the hill, to have it rebuilt. Their great benefactor, Mr. J. Creighton, offered to bear the costs. As the sisters could not find a building in Omaha large enough to accommodate the entire community during the progress of the work, the abbess with a few sisters remained to look after the building, while the others found temporary homes in the different monasteries of the Order in the United States. Through the influence of the Very Rev. Provincial Hugolinus Storff, O. F. M., the community at Chicago received four of these sisters into

their monastery, which number was increased for some weeks by the addition of two others. These sisters spoke only English, and as Mother M. Josepha was not at home in this language, Mother M. Veronica with all her other cares and duties was obliged to devote herself to them. This she did with the greatest willingness and charity. One of these sisters speaks of her in the following beautiful terms: "At my first meeting with the venerable mother I judged her to be noble minded, generous and unusually kindhearted. The perfect way in which she practiced the so-called little virtues of amiability, cheerfulness and unfailing patience while overburdened with care and work can only be appreciated by one in like circumstances. I was greatly edified by the kindy manner with which she received frequent interruptions while engaged in pressing business affairs. I considered these virtues to be the fruit of a spirit of self-sacrifice rather than mere kindness of heart and it seemed to me that they must be the result of an early generous resolve to obey the injunction of our Lord,—deny thyself."

CHAPTER XXVI

ILLNESS.

The great interest which Mother M. Veronica ever felt in her first foundation at Cleveland, moved her to keep up a constant familiar intercourse with its members, particularly with the abbess, whom she tried to aid by advice and, indeed, in every possible way.

The anxiety of the good mother may well be imagined when, during the spring of 1904, she heard that almost all the sisters at Cleveland were attacked by the grippe which seemed to take a rather malignant form and was accompanied by such a high fever that fears for the lives of some of the sisters were entertained. So many were ill that the sick had to wait on each other, going back to bed between times. In her compassionate anxiety Mother M. Veronica wrote the following letter to Mother M. Theresa:

Chicago, Ill., April 22, 1904.

Dearest Mother:

How dear you must be to God since He tries you so severely. By the trials of this life we can measure God's love for us. Sufferings are the seeds of eternal felicity, the more we suffer here below, the greater will be our eternal reward.

Your sorrow finds an echo in the hearts of our sisters. Several immediately offered themselves to go to help you in your trying position. Sister M. N—— and Sister M. N——

would like to go. Mother Abbess also said that she would be willing to send you Sister M. N—— and our extern sisters offered to send you Sister N——, as she is very good with the sick. Our dear Mother Abbess feels so deeply for you that she said if she had the strength she would want to run to Cleveland right away. She is willing to send you any choir or extern sister whom you may choose, even though it might cause us great inconvenience, and every one would be willing to go to you.

Of myself I need not say anything. How happy I would be if I could nurse your dear children and above all yourself, dearest mother, but at present I cannot think that to be God's holy will, for our own dear mother abbess is not at all well. So I must make this sacrifice for our dear Lord's sake—to be far from you and to be able only to pray and make sacrifices for you. We will all pray for your speedy recovery.

I humbly beg you to telegraph immediately if you need any one of us, and whom you wish. We will then tomorrow ask the permission of our most reverend archbishop and the sisters will depart tomorrow evening (the 23rd).

Who would have thought that the anxious mother who up to that time had been regarded as the strongest and healthiest member of the whole community, would, even before an answer to her letter could reach her, herself be in greater need of skillful nursing than any of the sisters at Cleveland?

During the last weeks she had been obliged to work harder than usual and to lose many hours of sleep. Sometimes the sister whose duty it was to waken the community

saw a light still burning in her cell at midnight, and noticed that Mother M. Veronica quickly put it out when the signal was given and came down in time for Matins. After Matins she sometimes sat up over her work until morning, but the effects of this privation of sleep were visible during the day in her pale and worn look and the continual violence she had to do herself to keep awake. The sisters were deeply grieved to see what tortures their poor mother had to endure to keep herself from falling asleep during the spiritual exercises, and they often begged her to go and rest. She would then smile sweetly and try to shake off the drowsiness, but rest she would not take.

During the night between April 23 and 24, being much exhausted, she fell into so profound a sleep that she did not hear the bell for Matins and could not be roused by a sister who came to waken her. When the bell rang in the morning at five o'clock she arose but felt so ill that she went to the cell of the abbess to ask a dispensation from the spiritual exercises When she arrived there she was obliged to hold onto the doorposts to keep from falling. Mother M. Josepha caught her in her arms, crying out: "Dearest mother, what is it? Dear sisters, come quick! St. Joseph, help!"

Immediately the infirmarian who was near ran to her assistance and held Mother M. Veronica up until another sister could bring a chair. She was deathly pale and moved her lips trying to speak, but could not utter a sound. All the sisters came in haste, one prayed, another wept, a third called the mother's name, while still another called upon St. Joseph. They saw that the dear Mother's right arm and

limb hung down as though helpless and tried to restore strength by rubbing, but without avail.

Priest and doctor were sent for and the latter came immediately. Meanwhile the sisters had placed Mother M. Veronica upon her bed, and when the doctor came he injected morphine into the lame arm, at which she started slightly, thus giving sign of life. He said: "This is all we can do now; we will see what will turn up later."

When the confessor, Rev. Fr. Francis Albers, O. F. M., arrived he called her name loudly, but received no answer nor did she make any movement; he could therefore only administer Extreme Unction, expressing his opinion that she would not rise again. Although apparently lifeless, she nevertheless perceived, though dimly, what was going on around her, particularly when she received Extreme Unction.

After the confessor and most of the sisters had left, Mother M. Veronica began to rally somewhat and by the time Mass was ended, she had so far regained consciousness as to be able to receive Holy Communion.

For about two weeks she remained quite paralized and was obliged to allow herself to be nursed and cared for like a little child. When she first realized her helpless state a deep sadness filled her heart and for hours she wept bitterly, not indeed for herself but for others to whom her condition caused so much trouble and sorrow, in particular for her aged mother who was thus deprived of her principal support after God.

But it was not long before her joyous nature and habitual conformity with God's holy will gained the upper

hand. She tried to smile with at least part of her face, as the other half remained for some time rigid from the stroke, and when the sisters who visited her asked her how she felt, she answered: "I am doing very well, for in no state could I better please God than in that in which He has placed me." Then she spoke of the love of God and how He ordains all for our greatest good. Thus she rather gave than received consolation.

The sad news that Mother M. Veronica had had a stroke of paralysis and that her right side was quite disabled came to the sisters at Cleveland like a thunderbolt from a clear summer sky. They forgot all about the grip and all the trouble connected with it and began to pray for their beloved sick mother with all the fervor of their souls.

Mother M. Theresa immediately began to plan a trip to Chicago, for matters of great importance to both communities made it strictly necessary that she consult with Mother M. Veronica before the latter's death.

Not many days later a message arrived stating that Mother M. Josepha was confined to her bed on account of an inflammation of the limbs so that both mothers were now in the infirmary.

Mother M. Theresa now resolved to go without delay. Two choir sisters, the time for whose perpetual vows had now arrived, were allowed to make their retreat although sick of grippe, and on the evening of the profession day Mother M. Theresa, with the permission of the Rt. Rev. Bishop, left for Chicago, taking with her a member of the Cleveland community who was a professional nurse.

What a sad meeting this was! Mother M. Josepha,

bent with age and sorrow, supporting herself upon a cane, had come downstairs for the first time since her illness to greet her guests; and both sides of the entrance of the enclosure were lined with long rows of sisters, among them those from Omaha, to welcome them. But one was missing; poor Mother M. Veronica, who but a few days before had so much desired to nurse the sick sisters at Cleveland, was now confined to a bed of pain, from which in all probability death alone would deliver her.

Mother M. Theresa's heart beat fast as she approached the infirmary, and she could hardly summon sufficient courage to enter. But as soon as she beheld the smiling though deathly pale face of her beloved mother, all sorrow was forgotten and the joy of meeting seemed to give new life to the patient. Her condition from that time improved more rapidly, her face assumed a healthier hue, and even some improvement was gradually noticeable in the helpless limbs.

The down-heartedness of the sisters was somewhat dispelled and their cheerfulness returned when they saw Mother M. Veronica improving. She herself kept up their courage with her witty remarks regarding her helpless condition. Never before had she been so cheerful as now on her bed of suffering.

When Mother M. Theresa, full of compassion, once remarked that at the sight of her she was reminded of the words of Job: "Have pity on me, have pity on me, at least you, my friends, for the hand of the Lord hath touched me," she replied that God had been very merciful to her and had punished her very lightly for her sins. She could

not have complained even though He had imposed the most terrible sufferings upon her.

To break the news as gently as possible to her relatives, she dictated a letter in which she spoke so cheerfully of herself that they could hardly have guessed what her condition really was. Among other things she told them that she had no pain, that she enjoyed the best of care, that she was getting well rested and strengthened and having a good time generally. In fact the idea had occurred to her before that at some time she might have a stroke of paralysis, and when her brother Karl died quite suddenly she prepared more carefully than ever for death, so that finally when the attack came she would have been ready, without any other preparation, to appear before her divine Judge.

Although in itself her sickness caused no pain, yet continually lying in the same position was a great torture. But, although now and then a little twitching about her mouth and a fruitless effort to slightly change her position, betrayed this, these immediately gave place to an expression of complete contentment and a most pleasant smile.

Indeed, the blithe patience of the sufferer transformed the infirmary into an abode of joy and consolation. The sound of merry laughter was heard there one day. The paralized mother was to try to stand upon her feet, but she had first to be raised and placed in this position. Mother M. Theresa wanted to assist her. Not having sufficient strength in her arms she thought that if Mother M. Veronica would put her arms around her neck from the back, she could raise her up in that way. The arms of the invalid were according laid around her neck and—one, two, three—

she raised herself up and the sick mother stood erect. In their merriment over this feat neither of them noticed that the sisters who were standing around had supported Mother M. Veronica on each side and had raised her into position. On all such occasions no one showed more merriment than the sufferer herself.

"He who carries his cross gayly and is full of joy in the midst of suffering, *he* is a great saint," says that lover of the cross, Ven. Angelina of the Servite Order. May we not justly apply these words to our Mother M. Veronica?

Various remedies, particularly massage, were employed and with good success. Even the slightest improvement caused joy to the whole community. Soon she was able to stand on her feet for a little while and this gave great relief from the painful bed-sores.

Gradually a little mental exertion was allowed and now the Custom Book which had been begun before the time of the Chicago foundation was talked over and discussed. Then Mother M. Theresa brought the plans for the new monastery which the Cleveland community was preparing to build.

Some years before they had purchased a site outside the city. The place on Perry street was no longer suitable for its purpose. When they had moved into it from the little convent on Broadway the community was very small and Perry street quiet, like a street in the suburbs. Houses were far apart and surrounded by large lots. But in the course of years houses grew up around them and the convent was situated almost in the heart of the now large and populous city. The neighborhood was very noisy and the

CHOIR OF THE CLOISTERED RELIGIOUS AT WEST PARK, OHIO.

schoolboys amused themselves climbing over the high enclosure fence into the convent grounds.

On account of these and other inconveniences it was considered advisable to build a new monastery in a secluded locality as soon as the community could hope to get the necessary means. At an early date plans had been drawn up in which work Mother M. Veronica had taken an active part. The plan of the monastery at Chicago was at first intended to serve as a model, but this was afterwards rejected in favor of the plan of a monastery of Poor Clares in Belgium having two inner courts, because by this arrangement the chapel as well as that part of the house destined for the use of the extern sisters could have windows from both sides.

At the time of Mother M. Veronica's sickness the plans had already been worked out by the Franciscan Brother Leonard, to whose devotedness and ability as an architect the practical arrangement of the new monastery is largely due; but there were still many details to be changed and Mother M. Veronica's thoughts were so busy with them that she could not sleep at night—the best inspirations seemed to come to her just then.

During the time that Mother M. Theresa was in Chicago difficulties began to arise at Cleveland. When the excavation for the foundation of the new monastery was begun, a solid bed of rock was found at the depth of a few feet, thus rendering proper drainage impossible; on account of which so large a building could not be put up on the property purchased without entailing great and lasting in-

conveniences. The same conditions prevailed throughout the entire locality.

The only thing to do was to look for an entirely new site. Several places near Cleveland in the Rocky River region were proposed, which Mother M. Theresa was to go to see on her return, before re-entering the enclosure. All this caused an animated correspondence and the necessity of her presence at the transactions was more and more urged upon her. The sisters were anxiously awaiting her and, all things considered, she began to feel that she might be neglecting her duty by remaining longer.

When Mother M. Veronica surmised that she intended to leave her, she entreated so earnestly that the visit be prolonged just one week that Mother M. Theresa had not the heart to refuse, but when the week was up nothing could detain her longer.

Mother M. Veronica indeed realized the importance of the business affairs which called her away, but she felt the separation, nevertheless, with all the keen sensitiveness peculiar to sick persons. Her grief was augmented by the thought that they would never meet again in this life, but the chief source of her sorrow was her anxiety about Mother M. Josepha, who after her death would be left at her advanced age and in her feeble health without the assistance of anyone who had had practical experience in the government of a community. A short time before and again during the leave-taking Mother M. Veronica fell into such paroxysms of weeping that Mother M. Theresa's heart bled and her eyes filled with tears as often as she thought of it. But withal the dear patient was entirely resigned to the will of

God, knowing that He required the sacrifice and would take care of all. As Mother M. Theresa was quite aware of the principal cause of her grief, to stay the flood of her tears she promised to return shortly before or just after her death to help and console the aged mother. Then she withdrew from her embrace and casting a last look upon the poor mother who lay so helplessly upon her bed and whom she would have liked to nurse until her death, she hastened to the enclosure door. She left behind the nurse who had come with her and set out for Cleveland accompanied by an extern sister.

Before Mother M. Theresa left Chicago Mother M. Veronica's oldest spiritual daughter, a member of the Cleveland community, celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of her entrance into the Order. She had been the first to enter the little convent on Broadway and receive the habit from Mother M. Veronica. This silver jubilee occurred just at the time when the mother was beginning to get a little strength back into the paralysed hand and the first great feat she performed was to write the first line of a letter to this sister. The letter itself was written by another at her dictation but her signature she traced at the end. Needless to say that this letter is among the most precious treasures of the recipient.

Mother M. Veronica's grief was renewed when Mother M. Theresa's first letter arrived, in which she gave expression to her sorrow in not having been able to stay longer. It was particularly hard for her never to receive a line written by the beloved hand which had so often reminded her of the paternal goodness of God. But when Mother M.

Veronica read the description of the place to be purchased as well as other news which the letter contained, her interest in her first foundation at Cleveland gained the upper hand and she ceased to give herself up to useless sadness. Indeed, she would hardly have found time to indulge in it for the treatments she had to undergo required much time and attention and the sisters came frequently to the infirmary to visit her.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MOTHER M. VERONICA'S ESTEEM OF HER VOCATION.

Never had Mother M. Veronica's virtues shone in a brighter light than during her last illness. Those about her also became better acquainted with them, because, not being engrossed with business affairs and visits from externs, she could give her undivided attention to her own soul and to the sisters who sought her assistance.

Her obedience had reached its highest point; as if she had no will of her own, she left herself entirely to the care of her superior and infirmarians. In their desire to have her recover as soon as possible, the sisters brought her all kinds of remedies, the use of which must at least have been a source of much mortification, nevertheless she took all with the same pleasant smile of gratitude whether it made her feel better or worse, provided only Mother Abbess wished it. In like manner she yielded to all other wishes of the sisters—now to perform an exercise with the lame arm, now to move the fingers of the paralysed hand, again she was asked to stand up to show what progress she was making. To all these requests she returned a child-like acquiescence.

About three months after Mother M. Veronica had received the stroke, her condition had so far improved that it was possible to move her about the house in a wheeling chair. Then her dear face beamed with joy and she so lovingly greeted the sisters who met her that they could not

restrain their tears of emotion. Still greater was her delight when she discovered that she could herself move the chair, and just enough to enable her to visit the Stations of the Cross near the infirmary. This now became one of her daily exercises.

But the greater part of the day she sat still in her chair and thus helped Mother M. Josepha in the government of the community. She translated for her the English letters, dictated important correspondence and manuscripts, and listened with great patience and charity to all the sisters who in their troubles and needs had recourse to her. No one left her without feeling consoled and cheered and encouraged in the practice of virtue.

Her beautiful example of heroic resignation springing from purest love of God and most profound self-contempt alone did more good than the most impresssive sermon. Never did she complain of her state, nor of anything connected with it, nor of anything which by God's permission had come upon her. Whatever evil might happen to her was in her eyes very little in comparison with what she believed she had deserved. Yes, she would have thought it presumption to imagine that by such light sufferings she could atone for her great sins and expiate part of her purgatory here on earth.

After three more months had elapsed she had porgressed so far as to venture to walk a little, leaning upon one of the sisters. We may imagine what lively joy this improvement called forth in the hearts of her daughters. She herself was supremely happy over it because now she was no longer obliged to inconvenience the priest to administer

to her the sacraments. As she was not yet able to ascend an ordinary staircase, Mother M. Josepha had double steps constructed over the one leading to the sacristy, which she could with some assistance make use of.

Now she began gradually to take part in the community exercises, at first she appeared only in choir, a little later in the refectory, and finally she was able to go again to the parlor for Mother M. Josepha. But she did not venture to walk alone, for once when making such an experiment she had fallen down several times and could be raised up only with great difficulty. Only once, on the last Sunday, five days before her death, she walked through the refectory all alone, the sisters being forbidden to look at her, and when she had happily arrived at her seat, she manifested so much pleasure over the accomplishment of this feat that all rejoiced with her.

It was a subject of much edification for the sisters to see the poor patient, as soon as she was able to move her limbs a little, immediately employ all her strength in the service of God. Never would she pass a place where she could see the tabernacle without standing still and trying to make a sort of genuflection. In choir, at table and wherever community exercises took place she tried, if it were at all possible, to observe even the smallest ceremonies, though usually at considerable cost. When she appeared among the sisters or received visitors she spoke by preference of God and religious subjects, and thus she still did much good to people of the world whom she happened to meet at the parlor grate. Ordinarily her visitors were young ladies who wished to learn something of the vocation and life of the

Poor Clares. Then her heart dilated and honeyed words of instruction and encouragement flowed from her lips, which irresistibly drew souls to her and made an indelible impression.

One of these young ladies relates: "Only twice did I speak to dear Mother M. Veronica before entering the enclosure, but these conversations, which lasted hardly two hours, sufficed to make her so dear and precious to my heart that I shall never be able to forget her. I recognized in her a great soul highly favored by God and far advanced on the way of perfection. Enlightened and inflamed by the Holy Ghost she spoke with a truly fiery zeal of the hidden life of our divine Redeemer, which she held up as a model for the religious life. 'Remember,' she said among other things, 'how the eternal God, the almighty Creator of heaven and earth, sent us His only begotten Son, Who is essentially like unto Himself, is God Himself. This Word begotten from the beginning was made flesh to redeem us and deliver us from the bondage of sin and the servitude of the evil spirit. The infinite God for love of us became a weak Child; Mary and Joseph were His parents and masters and He was subject upon them,* in most profound humility, perfect obedience and childlike simplicity. These virtues of our divine Master we also must imitate in the religious life, and especially we must become humble and obedient like children, that we may be able to enter by the narrow gate into everlasting life. He Himself said: Unless you become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.'†

"Then Mother M. Veronica explained in what true self-

* Luke II:5. † Matth. XVIII:3.

denial and detachment from self consists, and how the giving up of one's own will is the greatest sacrifice which man can render to his Creator. And this is done by perfect obedience to the superiors whom God has given us as His representatives.

"Regarding the *exterior* austerities of the Rule she remarked that even though we go bare-footed summer and winter, fast daily, never eat meat, arise for midnight Office —all this would be very little or rather nothing at all, if we had not the true religious spirit, for such works are neither meritorious nor pleasing to God when not actuated by the love of God. Nor are these penances the hardest part of the life, for we soon get accustomed to them. It is much harder by putting off all self-love and self-will to die not only to the world and all earthly things but also to one's self, and this warfare must be carried on until the end of life. Self-will we should put off on entering the Order as one takes off a garment, and in its place put on perfect obedience, which sanctifies and renders even the least works pleasing to God.

"While Mother M. Veronica thus put before me the religious life in all its severity, she herself was all kindness and amiability, so much so that I could feel no fear nor timidity, but was ready with a joyous heart to sacrifice all to God and to suffer all for Him. She encouraged me still more by going on to say, that, although of ourselves we can do nothing, yet we can do all things in Him Who strengthens us.

"Her manner of speaking was so simple and full of charity, so cheerful and inspired such confidence that it

seemed to me as if I had known her for years; and her pleasant smile so attracted me, and exercised an influence upon me beneficent as that of a sunbeam."

The reputation of Mother M. Veronica's virtue and the power of her prayers and of those of her sisters had spread far beyond the limits of Chicago, and letters arrived from many cities of America asking her advice and her prayers. From all parts of Chicago especially the sick and suffering had recourse to her, and with invincible patience and forgetfulness of self she dictated the answers to the many letters which daily came to her. She felt the greatest compassion for all the sick and suffering who told her of their sorrows, but the softest spot in her heart was for poor sinners.

To hear of a great crime was sufficient to arouse all her fervor and cause her to plead most earnestly and exhort her sisters to do the same, before the throne of God, for the conversion of the guilty ones. Having heard of the conversion of three criminals who had confessed their guilt and penitently received the Sacraments, her face beamed with joy and happiness and she could not thank God sufficiently for so extraordinary a conversion.

But Mother M. Veronica's zeal was not limited to one particular class of persons. She took the view that a daughter of St. Clare—her whole life and all her works—belongs to the holy Church and that she must be ready at any moment to sacrifice everything, even life itself, for the interests of the Church. Her great weapons—prayer and suffering—must be used now for a soul in her last agony, now for a poor sinner grown old in crime to obtain for him that last grace by which he may be saved, and, again, for the

pure and innocent in danger of losing the greatest of treasures; yes, her intercessory and expiatory activity must not stop with individuals, but must extend to whole cities, nations and countries. Here it should avert a great temporal calamity, there it is called upon to gain an entrance for missionaries or to defeat the evil designs of the wicked; in short, the zeal of a Poor Clare must embrace the whole world and all souls redeemed by the Precious Blood of Jesus.

Naturally, among all these souls, those have a special right to her spiritual succor who have recourse to her in their needs and recommend themselves to her prayers.

To the objection urged by many: Has not God placed these means at the disposal of all, and what need is there of particular religious Orders to aid mankind in this way? Mother M. Veronica was accustomed to make answer: "It is indeed true, that God has given these means to all men, that they may save their souls, but many *cannot* employ them and others *will not* employ them. Those who do not know God, the pagans and little children who have not yet attained the use of reason, cannot properly pray to God, also those whose minds are clouded by insanity or who are stupified by sickness or excessive pain.

"Those who *will not* have recourse to God are they who have no faith, who are in mortal sin or are entirely wrapt up in the things of this world.

"And yet all these classes of persons need the grace of God which is obtained by prayer and sacrifice united with the merits of Jesus Christ. Is it therefore not just that their neighbors interest themselves for them, just as we interest

ourselves for other poor and intercede with God in their behalf?

"But even those who are living members of the Church and endowed with the free use of reason have recourse to those who are near to God, that they may more quickly and efficaciously obtain through their intercession the accomplishment of their desires. And is this not most reasonable, for do we not when we wish something of the great ones of the earth have recourse to the influence of those who are near to them or who enjoy their favor? And if every Catholic must place confidence in the intercession of the saints, why should he not also hope to obtain graces through the prayers of the servants of God upon earth? It is true they are not yet confirmed and perfected in grace as the saints in heaven are, but what is wanting in this way is, as it were, compensated for by their sufferings united to the sacrifice of Christ which the inhabitants of heaven have not. If so many religious Orders take the task upon themselves of aiding their neighbor by active labor, and for this end place themselves in direct communication with him, why should there not also be a few Orders, which, in order to help him, turn immediately to Him to Whom all the miseries of His creatures are known and Who with one act of His will can do more than the united labors of all mankind could accomplish? That the members of such religious Orders, to be able to fulfil successfully this duty, must have their own sanctification at heart, must withdraw from the noise of the world and must unite sacrifice to their prayers, is self-evident."

When Mother M. Veronica spoke of her vocation, she

EXTERIOR CHAPEL AT WEST PARK, OHIO.

was all on fire and her enthusiastic words and ever new arguments inspired others also, her subjects as well as externs, with esteem for the contemplative life.

Many secular persons listened to these conversations with so much interest that they retained Mother M. Veronica's words in their memory longer than she did herself. On one occasion a woman returned to the convent and begged her to tell her once more the different classes of persons who had special need of prayer, the number of which she exactly remembered. Mother M. Veronica in relating this afterward smilingly remarked that she could not help a certain feeling of embarrassment, as she had never counted them and did not know whether she would be able, in her reply to the woman, to fill up the exact number.

But there were also others, not so well disposed, who thought they discovered a certain self-complacency in her words. But she cared neither for the praises of the one nor the criticisms of the other, because she was dead to self and had at heart only the glory of God and the good of her neighbor, and if she highly esteemed her Order and was zealous for its glory she at the same time looked upon herself as a most unworthy and contemptible member of it.

The favorite examples which she brought forth to prove the dignity and efficacy of the contemplative life were, the prayer of Abraham which would have saved Sodom if only a few just souls had been found there; the prayer of Moses which, when mortification (the lifting up of the arms) was added thereto, was more powerful than the whole army of Josue; Magdalene at the Feet of Jesus, of whom our divine Savior said she had chosen the better part;

the lives of so many saints and especially the most holy Virgin whose life passed away in solitude and prayer; the occupation of the highest choirs of heavenly spirits who stand ever before the throne of God singing the eternal *Sanctus*; the thirty years of our Lord's Hidden Life, in which the eternal Wisdom chose to give to the world an example of every virtue; and above all the life of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, a life of solitude and prayer, a life wholly hidden and without any outward sign or activity, but which is of infinitely more worth and efficacy than the united efforts of angels and of men.

A letter received from a zealous missionary priest in which the writer spoke of herself and her daughters as his "fellow missionaries" was a source of much consolation to Mother M. Veronica. She spoke of this to her sisters and took occasion from it to remind them anew of the greatness and nobility of their vocation, telling them that while the work of the missionary was to save souls by preaching and administering the sacraments, their vocation was by prayer and sacrifice to gain an entrance for grace into souls, that the word of God might not fall on barren soil. Of such value was sacrifice in the eyes of God, that our Redeemer did not save the world by preaching but by the sacrifice of Himself upon the cross.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

DEATH OF MOTHER M. VERONICA.

"Death comes like a thief in the night." For a long time Mother M. Veronica had daily, yes, hourly, looked it in the face, but it came at last just at the time when the improvement in her condition gave rise to the hope that she might still promise herself a few more years of life.

After the paraletic stroke God had visited her with great interior trials, which were for her more painful than the most serious illness and which gave birth to an ever increasing desire within her "to be delivered from the body of this death," "to be dissolved and to be with Christ." She had recourse to the divine mercy and implored the most loving heavenly Father to have pity on her. Other persons also distinguished for virtue and piety were asked for their prayers.

About this same time Mother M. Josepha had a solemn novena made by the whole community to obtain her cure if it were the will of God. Mother M. Veronica told this to a postulant who was ill, and with tears streaming from her eyes begged her not to pray for her recovery but for a spiritual grace for which she had been praying for years. The postulant, who before entering the monastery had had frequent intercourse with Mother M. Veronica and who was highly esteemed by her, goes on to relate: "She so impressed me with the importance of her request that I at once ceased praying for her restoration to health, and begged the

Infant Jesus to grant her request if such were His good pleasure. This was about three weeks before our dear Lord in His infinite mercy called her to Himself. After my recovery she gave me a retreat and during this time she seemed to be wholly enlightened and inspired by God. The words of wisdom she spoke seemed to penetrate my very soul and I marveled that any human being could speak so divinely. Her advice, so wise, so consoling, those sweet, tender words spoken to me, her poor, humble child, are impressed indelibly upon my soul never to be effaced until I meet her in heaven.

"She had no fear of death, but was always waiting for the call of her heavenly Spouse, for once during my illness she told me that at the time she was first stricken down with paralysis, she was conscious of all that was going on about her, she thought she was dying, but she said she was not afraid, she rather rejoiced and was willing to go to God, but He did not see fit to take her then but spared her to suffer a little more for His dear sake. * * *

"I can still see her beautiful face, as it looked on that day when I knelt at her feet and gazed upon it for the last time in this world. Her eyes were filled with tears of pity as she bade me farewell;* her kind, loving heart was filled with sorrow for her poor child, and I sincerely hope she is ever interceding with our dear Lord for all her children, that we may all be united with her in heaven."

At the close of the novena one of the sisters was quite down-hearted because her beloved mother did not yet feel any better. She went up to her as she was coming down for

* This postulant was obliged to leave on account of ill-health.

Mass and whispered, "Now, again, our dear Lord has not heard us, and I thought that this time He would surely cure you."

Mother M. Veronica answered in her gentle way, "O, child, He did hear your prayers for me, and if in His divine wisdom and providence He will not yet give me perfect health, He will give me instead another grace which will be far more advantageous for me."

Although every little improvement in Mother M. Veronica was greeted with delight on all sides, and the sisters jubilantly applauded her when for the first time after the stroke she began to walk, it was, nevertheless, a sad sight to see her coming along so laboriously, led by two of the nuns like a child just learning to walk, and often the sisters turned aside to brush away a silent tear, for it pained them deeply to see her so helpless.

But with it all the mother's face beamed with contentment, and her eyes shone with such joy that it seemed as if she hardly felt this cross; certainly it was evident that she carried it more easily, more joyously and with more resignation than did those who bore it only out of sympathy.

Of her interior crosses she spoke but to very few in whom she placed great confidence. Besides these interior trials she was obliged during the last months of her life to take upon herself great crosses for the welfare of her community and for souls particularly dear to her, for whom she felt as for herself. Even the sorrow was not spared her of seeing her self-sacrificing and indulgent charity rewarded with ingratitude. Thus the divine Bridegroom found her interiorly and exteriorly nailed to the cross, a victim of the

love of God and her neighbor, when to adorn her for the heavenly nuptials He sent her that last painful illness, the harbinger of her death.

On Sunday morning, November 5, 1905, Mother M. Veronica, after her morning meditation, wrote with her left hand the following lines: "God alone and naught beside is the end of the religious life. To lead a life of faith, to seek and expect no consolation,—God alone—to desire to be pleasing to Him—to seek only to render Him pleasure."

Afterward she assisted at Mass during which she received Holy Communion. Had she any presentment that she was receiving her divine Lord for the last time into her loving heart? At any rate she had prepared herself for this Holy Communion, as was her pious custom, as if it were to be the last of her life and had received It as her Viaticum.

After the exercises of devotion in the choir she went to the refectory with the community to take a light breakfast, as is customary on all Sundays outside of Lent. As Mother M. Josepha was prevented from being present, it was her duty to preside. To the astonishment of all the sisters she walked alone and without any support to her place.

"God be thanked," thought some, "now our dear Mother will soon be entirely well and will be able to be always with us again." But God had decreed otherwise.

When she had reached her place she sood as if in ecstasy, her eyes raised to heaven, her face radiant with joy, and thus with great emphasis she gave her blessing to the assembled sisters. This was a great surprise to all, for since she had been released from the office of abbess, she could never be prevailed upon to bless the sisters, even at times

when Mother M. Josepha on account of protracted illness had been unable to appear in the community for some time. It would seem as if she had a presentment of her approaching death, and wished as a loving mother to give her last blessing to her children.

About nine o'clock she read in a clear voice the points for the meditation and afterward dictated some letters. She again appeared in the refectory for dinner and it was during this meal that by a loving hand she was presented with that which was to cause her death. From childhood this particular food had never agreed with her and many times it had made her quite ill; but she said nothing and with her accustomary spirit of mortification and consideration for others, took what was given her.

Several hours later she felt the consequences and spoke of it to her infirmarian. The latter wanted to give her a simple remedy immediately, but the faithful observer of holy poverty declined, as she had not the express permission of her superior and did not like to let her know that she did not feel well. It was ever so with these two mothers, in their mutual affection each tried to spare the other any sorrow.

But as the feeling of distress continued Mother M. Veronica finally yielded to the infirmarian and allowed her to ask Mother M. Josepha for the remedy.

As if she had a foreboding of what was to come the abbess went to her immediately in great anxiety, "Oh, dearest mother, surely you will not be sick?" she said. To which Mother M. Veronica pleasantly replied: "Oh, it is nothing; I have only a little stomach trouble."

In the afternoon after Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament she went to the parlor at the urgent request of the portress. Here at the grate she gave her blessing to the extern sisters as she had done in the morning to the choir sisters. She appeared so strong and happy that all who saw her cherished the hope that she would regain her former health.

She so carefully concealed her suffering that no one realized how badly she really felt. But when supper-time came she said it would be useless for her to go to the refectory for she could not eat anything.

In the evening a violent attack of vomiting came on, followed during the night by violent pain and chills. About two o'clock she felt unable to remain longer in bed. A little hot water gave some relief, but it was not until toward morning that she could get any sleep.

After Mass a strange priest asked to see the abbess, and to spare her Mother M. Veronica went to the parlor for her. She concealed the pain she was enduring beneath her usual kindly smile. She even seemed to be more than ordinarily cheerful, inculcating by example what she had so often taught in days of health,—that the spouse of Jesus crucified must be the more cheerful the more she has to suffer.

When the visitor had departed she was trembling from head to foot from the violence she had done herself, and it was with greatest difficulty that she was able to reach the infirmary. She afterwards asknowledged that she could hardly refrain from moaning aloud.

During the night the intense pain returned, accompanied by a high temperature. Nevertheless, in the morn-

ing she asked and obtained permission to rise that she might hear Mass in the oratory which was on the same floor.

The pain and fever gradually subsided but the lack of food and sleep and the frequent vomiting rendered her very weak.

When towards evening the doctor arrived, he declared that she had inflammation of the bowels and ordered hot poultices which had to be renewed every ten minutes. In the morning the sisters helped her from the bed to an invalid's chair for they knew it was very hard for her to remain lying down. It was confession morning, and when the infirmarian returned from confession she found Mother M. Veronica so miserable that she offered to help her back to bed. But her first thought was for the infirmarian herself who had been up all night. "Go and take a little nourishment, then we will both rest," she said.

She could keep nothing on her stomach, not even the medicine which was given her.

It was a torture for her to lie in bed, yet she did not ask to get up but was content with whatever was done with her. When being helped out of bed she remarked, "Our dear Lord wishes me to become again a little child."

At every service she would say: "Do not forget the good intention, dear sister, think that you are nursing the Infant Jesus."

But still she tried to care for herself as far as possible. On the very morning of the day of her death she washed her face with her left hand, notwithstanding her extreme weakness.

While Mass was being read in the chapel she tried to

follow it from her bed. When almost overcome by drowsiness on account of having lost so much sleep, she roused herself and said: "Oh, I must try to keep awake, Mass is being read."

After the consecration she said in a loud voice: "Heavenly Father, receive Him, pay Thyself and have mercy on me." Then she requested the infirmarian to read the following prayer which she had herself composed.

Oh, heavenly Father, Thy divine Son, eternal Truth, has said: Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. And: All that you shall ask the Father in My Name He will give unto you. I most humbly and most ardently beseech Thee (although I, a poor sinner, deserve only chastisement) for the sake of these true words of Jesus, grant me this grace. * * * I ask it in the name of Jesus, for the sake of His Precious Blood, for the sake of His holy Wounds, for the sake of His holy Life, Passion and Death, for the sake of His infinite merits and for the sake of the efficacy of all holy Masses; I pray, I seek, I knock. Oh, heavenly Father, hear me. Jesus has promised it, Jesus has promised it. What *I* do not deserve, *Jesus* deserves. Thou canst not leave His sacred word and promise unfulfilled!

When the prayer was ended Mother M. Veronia said: "Oh, yes, what *we* cannot merit nor obtain, our dear Savior can now, while He offers Himself to His heavenly Father, obtain for us." Truly, a beautiful end of a life firmly founded on faith! Not upon her own merits did she rest, but upon the Corner-stone, Jesus Christ. And how faith-

fully she observed His injunction: When you have done all that you could do, say, We are unprofitable servants.

Her weakness increasing, Mother M. Veronica asked for something to strengthen her a little, but when they brought it she was too weak to raise her hand to her mouth and the infirmarian had to give it to her.

When asked if she wished for anything else, she begged in an humble and timid way, as one who deserved nothing, for a little tea.

In the meantime Mother M. Josepha with a few sisters entered the infirmary. All thought that this desire for nourishment was a sign of improvement, but feared to give her too much lest it should cause vomiting again. Not suspecting that the nearness of death caused this desire for food, they told her that in half an hour she might have some more. Calmly and with resignation she now waited, and, like a child to whom something has been promised, watched the clock to see when the half hour was up.

In her anxiety for her dear patient, the infirmarian was somewhat annoyed with two sisters who were talking together at a little distance. "O, dear mother," she said, "those sisters have so little consideration for you."

This was too much for Mother M. Veronica's charity. She gave the sister a look which she could never forget,—so gentle, loving but withal reproachful, and said, "Sister N., always be patient."

Her weakness steadily increasing and all human aid proving of no avail, Mother M. Josepha, in the anguish of her soul, was planning with some of the religious to make a written promise for obtaining her cure from God. Mother

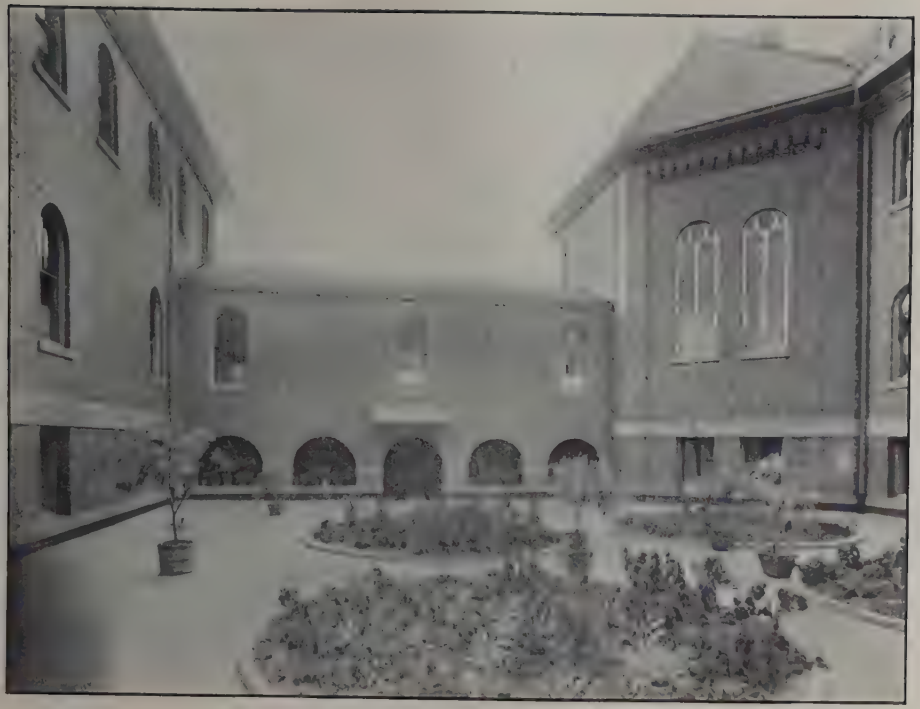
M. Veronica overheard all this, and summoning all her strength called from her corner: "But you must add, if it be God's will." But all was to prove unavailing, for, in the inscrutable decrees of God, her last hour had come.

As her condition became more and more alarming, the confessor of the community was sent for. She begged Mother M. Josepha to help her to prepare for confession. While making an act of contrition a little quiver appeared about her mouth and it seemed as if she were going to cry. But when Mother M. Josepha told her not to do that because it would weaken her too much, the sweet and gentle smile appeared again.

With a supreme effort she tried to express her conformity to the will of God, saying: "Oh, my dearest Jesus, Thy holy will be done," and with this her voice was hushed forever.

The community had by this time assembled in the infirmary to assist their dying mother with their prayers. The confessor, Rev. Father Benignus Schmitz, O. F. M., soon arrived and gave her the last absolution and extreme unction. Then with touching sympathy and great fervor he read the recommendations of a departing soul, during which gently and sweetly, without a struggle, Mother M. Veronica gave up her spirit into the hands of her Creator.

The heart of the noblest, the best, the most loving of mothers had ceased to beat; the beautiful eyes were dimmed in death, the lips from which had flowed so many words of consolation and benediction were closed forever, but the sweet smile still transfigured the loved features and seemed to speak of her unutterable, unending happiness.



VIEW OF COURTYARD WITHIN THE CLOISTER AT WEST PARK, OHIO.

Her ardent prayer for the desired grace had been answered most abundantly. The most terrible, the only true evil, sin, which she had feared more than all the sufferings of this life,—more than the terrors of death, could never again find a place in her; she could never more grow cold in love nor become unfaithful to her divine Spouse; for as she had departed in faith and love and perfect resignation to His divine will, may we not hope that she was admitted to that eternal union with Him toward which all her desires and all her efforts tended?

CHAPTER XXIX

THE LAST LOVING SERVICES.

In reverential silence broken only by sobs and the sound of weeping, the religious knelt for some time around the beloved corpse.

They could not realize the loss which had so unexpectedly come upon them. But crowding back that sense of nameless woe, they tried to fulfill towards her the last duties of charity and to show themselves her true children, murmuring, though with broken hearts: "Lord, Thy will be done."

With admirable presence of mind the aged Mother M. Josepha took care that everything which the Rule prescribes was observed and that all the wishes of the departed were carried out. Her coffin was plain, her clothing poor. Day and night candles were kept burning and the sisters in turn, two by two, watched and prayed beside her. The black-draped walls of chapel and choir resounded with the voice of prayer—the penitential psalms and Office of the Dead.

Perhaps the dear mother still continued to exercise her office of consoler even after her death, for in the midst of their great sorrow her daughters felt a deep peace.

The resignation of one sister in particular excited admiration. Ill health and certain interior trials had obliged her to have frequent recourse to the mother in whom she placed her confidence. When asked for the reason of this fortitude, she replied: "After the death of our dear mother

it was very hard for me to resign myself to the will of God, and I ascribed the cause of her unexpected death now to this, now to that exterior circumstance. After having spent a sleepless night brooding over these thoughts, about four o'clock in the morning, while perfectly awake, I saw Mother M. Veronica standing before me radiant with contentment and happiness. She said in a joyful tone, 'Oh, how happy I am to have died. Could you change this by a slight movement of your finger, but contrary to God's *will,* you should not wish to do it; nay, you must go still further, could you change it by a movement of your finger, but contrary to God's *good pleasure* you should not wish to do it.' Then, a look of terrible anguish coming over her features, she added, 'Oh, the pain, the agony I suffered before death! I could not have endured it an hour longer! But when I died I was so happy.' Then, as her face took on its former expression of beautitude, she disappeared."

Whether this apparition was a reality or but a dream, certain it is that its effects were remarkable and lasting, for she who before had been so extremely sad and down-hearted now become so courageous that she sang at the Requiem Mass without shedding a tear.

The last painful separation had yet to be endured, and the day of the burial came only too soon for the nuns.

By a most fortunate circumstance two of the extern sisters from Cleveland who had been Mother M. Veronica's subjects and one of whom had come over with her from Germany were, just at that time, at the monastry in Chicago, and had the consolation of receiving her last blessing with the others and of being present at the funeral services. But

all expected that Mother M. Theresa would also come, for they remembered the promise she had made Mother M. Veronica before returning to Cleveland, and they had added the word "come" to the telegram which announced to her community the death of their common mother. But the hour for the services drew near and she had not yet arrived.

The Requiem Mass was to be a Pontifical High Mass, Rt. Rev. Bishop Muldoon wishing to honor the memory of the departed by officiating himself. Several Franciscan Fathers and some secular priests were present in the sanctuary and the lower part of the chapel was crowded with friends and benefactors. The confessor of the community gave an impressive sermon, taking for his text the words: For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Phil. I. 21.

After having dwelt upon the life and virtues of the departed, the preacher continued: "We have reason to hope that at the hour of her death our divine Savior said to her, Come, my spouse, receive the crown which has been prepared for thee from eternity. She who left all on earth to be poor with Jesus, now possesses—may we not hope?—God Himself, the supreme and most perfect Good, and heaven with its immeasurable joys. She who upon earth despised the love of creatures and walked in virginal purity, now follows the Lamb and sings the new canticle. She who upon earth made the sacrifice of her own will, obeying others that she might fulfill the will of God, now reigns with Christ. She who upon earth wore the poor habit of St. Clare, is now clothed in glory above. She who upon earth lived in silent seclusion, is now a princess there in the

heavenly court. She who here practiced penance and fasted so strictly, is now satiated with the abundance of the house of God, and drinks from the streams of divine beatitude. She who upon earth carried the cross, now wears the imperishable crown. She who upon earth so often chanted the praises of God, now sings with the choirs of the blessed, the eternal "Alleluja" before the throne of God. She, the faithful child of St. Francis, the seraphic saint, the worthy daughter of St. Clare and St. Colette is now—so we piously hope—united with them in heavenly glory. Christ was her life and death was her gain.

"And you, venerable sisters, who full of sorrow stand around the mortal remains of your reverend mother, dry your tears; you should rather rejoice with her as with one who is delivered from a great evil, who has fought the good fight and happily accomplished the earthly pilgrimage, and has now either entered into eternal rest or soon will enter therein when perfectly purified from the little faults and imperfections which the most pure eye of God may have found in her. To assure for her and to hasten this blessed time, you will call upon the mercy of God and will offer up for her the infinite merits of Jesus Christ. In heaven she will pray for you in return.

"Imitate her beautiful example; follow her counsels and instructions; be faithful in the observance of the holy Rule; persevere in the love of Jesus Christ; be fervent in prayer; love, support, edify one another. Then you also may say: For me to live is Christ and death is gain. Then you will one day find your mother again in heaven and rejoice with her eternally.

"All we who are gathered together here, to honor her memory and to pray for the repose of her soul, should endeavor not to attach our hearts to the vain and transitory goods of the world, but to lead Christian lives, to fulfill conscientiously the duties of our various states and thus prepare ourselves for a holy death and a happy eternity. Amen."

To prevent any complaints which might be raised by persons living near the monastery grounds, the grave which was to receive the mortal remains of Mother M. Veronica, had been lined with cement and was to be closed with a large cement cover.

Mother M. Josepha who knew how much Mother M. Theresa would wish to look once more upon the beloved features, walked back and forth almost beside herself with grief and excitement asking if she had not arrived yet, to which the sisters were always obliged to answer in the negative. They could not wait longer and the funeral procession started.

Had Mother M. Veronica been buried without the enclosure, hundreds of persons who knew and esteemed her would have followed her to the grave, but as it was, the strict laws of enclosure permitted entrance only to the clergy and extern sisters.

Full of compassion, the Rt. Rev. Bishop told the sisters to embrace their mother once more and bid her farewell, which they did amid abundant tears.

Poor Mother M. Josepha repeated continually, "O, Lord, Thy will be done!" Then she asked again if Mother M. Theresa had not come yet and wanted to have the grave

left open until she arrived. But when she was informed that it was useless to expect her that day as the train from Cleveland had arrived some time before and that it was not advisable to leave the grave open longer on account of the inclement weather, she consented that the coffin be lowered into the vault. After the prayers of the church and the blessing with holy water, the heavy cement cover was laid over and closed up.

The good people of the world who had known and loved Mother M. Veronica were not slow in giving proofs of their gratitude and sincere affection. They sent in numerous religious articles to be touched to her body, and beautiful cut flowers and plants for the funeral, while for many months alms came to the Franciscan Fathers for Masses for the repose of her soul.

The telegram announcing the sad news of Mother M. Veronica's death to the sisters at Cleveland called forth the greatest sorrow and sympathy. It came so unexpectedly. The latest reports concerning her condition had been so encouraging that the sisters had begun to entertain the hope of seeing her with them in the spring at their new monastery at West Park (which was nearing completion and which they hoped soon to be able to occupy), there in the beautiful, fresh, country air to recover entirely. But the infinite wisdom of God had decreed that the next meeting should be in eternity. So they sought consolation in conformity with the will of God and in prayer for the beloved mother.

Here as in Chicago the Office of the Dead and the Penitential Psalms were recited daily for thirty days, Requiem

Masses were celebrated and many Holy Communions, indulgenced prayers and other devotions were offered for her.

In her first grief Mother M. Theresa had entirely overlooked the word "come" in the telegram. Nor did she remember her promise to Mother M. Veronica. She only tried to answer for herself the question whether to attend the funeral of a spiritual mother were a sufficient reason for leaving the enclosure, and her conscience answered, "no," though her heart would willingly have made any sacrifice to see her again upon earth, even as a corpse. She would, moreover, have been so glad to be able to console the severely tried Mother M. Josepha, but contented herself with immediately addressing a few lines of comfort to her.

In the afternoon of the day before the funeral, while alone in her cell, Mother M. Theresa felt an unaccountable agitation come over her, it seemed as if the departed were urging her to hasten to Chicago. The impulse came to her to ask the permission of the Rt. Rev. Bishop and she walked toward the door intending to send an extern sister to him, then she sat down again fearing that she might not be doing right. Not until there was no longer a possibility of getting the evening train did she grow more calm.

When, a little later, a letter arrived from Chicago which described in such heartrending terms the grief of the aged Mother M. Josepha and her need of having some help in the government of the community for a little while, and which reminded her of the promise made to Mother M. Veronica, Mother M. Theresa resolved to inform the Rt. Rev. Bishop of all these circumstances and to ask his permission to go to Chicago.

Not only did his lordship most willingly grant this permission but in his fatherly kindness sent tickets for herself and the extern sister who was to accompany her, and his blessing for the journey. They departed in the evening of the same day, Mother M. Theresa having fixed the date for her return, to allay the fears of some who were afraid she might remain in Chicago.

They found the monastery at Chicago changed into an abode of mourning. The black draperies which hung from the walls of chapel and choir, the monotonous chant of the penitential psalms, the eyes of the sisters red with weeping, all spoke of the great loss the community had sustained. But withal, there was an expression of silent peace upon the faces, and frequent expressions of resignation and joyous hope were mingled with the words of grief. No, they had not bidden her farewell forever, a few short years and they would be reunited in the land where there is no parting.

After the first greetings were over, Mother M. Josepha led her guest to the choir, where the place formerly occupied by Mother M. Veronica was still draped in black and decorated with white flowers. Then she pointed out to Mother M. Theresa the place in the infirmary whence the heavenly Bridegroom had called her to the eternal wedding feast. All was so still, it seemed as if the sunshine had departed from the house, one felt painfully that its genial influence was missing.

Together they went to the fresh mound in the cemetery, where they prayed for her, while their tears moistened the cold earth.

During her stay in Chicago, Mother M. Theresa daily

THE CEMETERY AT CHICAGO.

(THE FIRST GRAVE AT THE LEFT OF THE WALK IS THAT OF VEN. MOTHER M. VERONICA.)

visited the grave of her beloved mother, and there prayed for her and recommended to her all her intentions. Neither the inclemency of the weather nor the pressure of much work were allowed to interfere with this visit. Before returning to Cleveland she planted a modest little flower over the spot where the faithful mother's heart lay at rest.

THE END.

The following pages contain selections from the writings of Mother Mary Veronica, found after her death.

MOTHER M. VERONICA'S MEDITATIONS FOR THE DIVINE OFFICE.

(These meditations were written on slips of paper and placed in the reverend mother's breviary at the psalms of the corresponding hours.)

MATINS.

Contrition—The last things.

Invitatorium—O, all ye holy angels and saints, help me to make reparation to God for my sins,—for the time I have lost! Obtain for me great compunction of heart! You know what eternal happiness is, of which I have lost so much,—what sin and infidelity toward God are—the God Whom you behold.—O, all holy penitents, guardian angels, my holy patrons, holy mother St. Clare, holy mother St. Colette, O, Mary, my mother, Queen of heaven!

First Nocturn—Number and magnitude of my sins.

Cast a glance over my life, (a) in the world—still so young a child and yet so great a sinner. When and where have I been guiltless! (b) in religion—O, my God, who can count my infidelities,—the graces abused! (c) since the last retreat—countless are my infidelities as the sands on the seashore, outnumbering the hairs of my head! How many graces abused! If Thou, O God, wilt mark iniquities, Lord, who shall stand it? Turn away Thy Face from my sins!

Second Nocturn—Death.

This is perhaps my last day; I may die tonight,—then, tomorrow I will be in eternity! My death-bed,—as my life, so my death. My strength vanishes, a cold perspiration covers my forehead, eternity approaches. Merciful Jesus, have mercy on me! My years pass before me,—O, how dear,—a lifetime lost.—I might have been a saint, such an ocean of grace! What inestimable losses for a whole eternity! As a Poor Clare I was destined to be a queen in heaven, while alas, alas, alas, I find myself in the lowest place!

Third Nocturn—My soul. Judgment.

If I judge myself, I shall not be judged.

1—We must give an account of every idle word; all, every omission, every thought will be judged.

2—Every sin, every infidelity merits punishment.

3—The more graces, the greater the guilt. What does an unfaithful, lukewarm Poor Clare deserve? That God should reject her—allow her to fall into mortal sin—withdraw her holy vocation—that He cast her into the depths of hell. Whosoever does not esteem little things will perish by degrees. Are little things still little after such great graces and so long a religious life? "I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth." Whereinto? Into the abyss of *Hell.*

Go to the brink of the abyss and contemplate:—

1—The flames in the caldron of hell.

2—The horrible forms.

3—Listen to the gnashing of teeth, the fearful blasphemies.

4—The terrible inward despair.

5—A lifetime lost.

6—Graces abused.

7—The Incarnation of Jesus, His bitter Passion and Death, all in vain.

8—The holy Sacraments have also been instituted for the damned.

9—The fruits of the holy sacrifice of the Mass have been applied to them.

10—God pressed them to be converted to Him.

11—They might so easily have saved their souls by a single confession,—by perfect contrition at the hour of death.

12—So short the pleasure,—so long and horrible the pain.

13—No more time now to do penance,—all is over! The soul lost, heaven lost, God lost, forever! ! ! No more time! No more redemption! It is

ETERNITY.

Alas! into the abyss of hell many fall at every hour. At this very hour I deserve to be burning in the abyss of hell!

LAUDS.

Contrition; the motive being the length, depth and height of the love of God.

First, *Dominus regnavit*—God's greatness and dominion. I, a weak, miserable worm of the earth, have revolted against Him.

Elevaverunt flumina—The flood of my sins rises up against Him.

Second, *Jubilate*—Let all the earth praise the Lord! I

should have praised Him, for: *Scitote quia ipse est Deus, ipse fecit nos.* He is my God and my Creator, Who created me in preference to millions of possible creatures, although He forsaw my sins. O, my God, how couldst Thou create me? My Creator is *God! Populus eius et oves pascuae eius.* I have not been a good sheep of this best, most faithful Shepherd.

Third, *Deus, Deus meus*—Length of the love of God. As long as God has loved Himself,—through all ages, from eternity—He has loved me most ardently, ordained all good things for me, although He foresaw my ingratitude.

Deus misereatur nostri—But He wishes to pardon; He presses me to return to Him, by the breadth of His love, His benefits. He loaded me with benefits from the first moment of my existence, benefits of soul and body, greater and more numerous than are bestowed on so many millions of others.

Benedicat—God blesses us, our God—*et metuant*—and I have neither loved nor feared Thee, O, Thou Who art all Good!

Fourth, *Benedicite*—Height of the love of God. A higher degree of sanctifying grace and a destiny for greater glory in heaven granted me above many others. O, God, hast Thou forgotten my sins?

Benedicat Terra—Depth of the love of God. Incarnation of Jesus. Thou dost go to the uttermost limits,—a God becomes Man! *Verbum caro factum est.* The Word was made flesh, a poor, suffering Child, born in a stable,—for me!

Benedicamus Patrem—for so much love.

Benedictus es, Domine, in firmamento coeli, blessed art

Thou, O, most amiable Child *et laudabilis,* worthy of all praise and glory, exalted above all forevermore.

Fifth, *Laudate Dominum de coelis*—Passion of Christ. Jesus is torn with scourges, wounds are for a garment. With three nails He is suspended from terrible wounds! ! ! The blessed Head is most painfully pierced with thorns—He is spit upon, buffeted, the tongue parched and embittered with gall and vinegar. On His bed of death He is forsaken by His Father,—mocked, derided—He dies in an ocean of disgrace and pain! O, power of love over a God! O, abyss of my ingratitude, I have offended my Savior, increased His sufferings, so often, for such trifles!

Cantate—My holy vocation the closest imitation of Jesus—*quia beneplacitum est Domino in populo suo*—Thou art pleased in Thy people, Thou hast placed me among Thy beloved ones and how have I repaid Thee! O, long-suffering God, have I not merited to be cast out again into the world on account of my infidelity?

Exultabunt Sancti—Rejoice ye hosts of saints and especially ye holy penitents, and glorify God with me! a new abyss of love—the holy sacrament of penance, instituted in advance to raise me up when I had ruined myself by sin! Only Love can love thus. And I have not loved this Love, have offended It—so often, so grievously!

Laudate Dominum in sanctis eius—Come, ye heavenly hosts, in this joyous and solemn canticle let us offer to the infinitely great and perfect God, all our reverence, our most profound adoration, unconditional obedience, unreserved oblation, to make satisfaction for my criminal life. O, let

me not die, my God, my supreme Good, until I have atoned as far as possible by fidelity an hundred fold!

Hymn—All ye holy angels, particularly ye seraphim, and all saints and elect, sing with me the praises of divine Love! God dwells among us under the form of bread, for almost nineteen hundred years He has thus remained with us! God offers Himself continually for us—He is the Food of our souls. O, abyss, O, excess of love! O, my Jesus, would that I had the heart of a seraph, of a St. Mary Magdalene, of a St. Theresa, to render Thee love for love!

Benedictus—Blessed be the ever merciful God!—A new abyss of divine love opens before me—God still calls me to perfection. Father, I have sinned! My good Shepherd, behold Thy lost sheep!

Resolution: *Serviamus illi—in sanctitate—Omnibus diebus nostris.* This is what I should have done. This I shall now do with the help of Thy grace. GOD IS LOVE.

MEDITATION ON THE LIFE AND PASSION OF JESUS.

MATINS.

Venite. The holy angels surround Thee and call Thee to adore the Lord with them. Ponder devoutly the sense of the *Venite*.

Hymn. Salute the most Holy Trinity—the presence of God.

FIRST NOCTURN.

1. Ps. The Annunciation. Gabriel salutes Mary, "Ave Maria, gratia plena," and legions of holy angels praise God with him. Sing this psalm with them. O heavenly Father, how dost Thou love us poor sinners!

2. Ps. The Birth of Jesus. Sing with the angels and with the shepherds. O, Jesus, to what has love brought Thee!

3. Ps. The Circumcision. See, the Precious Blood of Jesus flows—His pain, His tears. O, Jesus, even as a Child, Thou wilt shed Thy Blood for us!

SECOND NOCTURN.

1. Ps. The adoration of the three kings. O, Infant Jesus, how poor and little art Thou! Give us their fidelity and spirit of sacrifice.

2. Ps. The Presentation of Jesus in the temple. O,

little Lamb of God, Thou dost offer Thyself to die for me upon the cross! O, Mary, what does thy mother's heart feel?

3. Ps. The Flight into Egypt. O, little Child Jesus, what great poverty and hardships didst Thou endure in this strange land, with Thy holy mother and faithful St. Joseph!

THIRD NOCTURN.

1. Ps. The entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem. O, Jesus, meek and humble of heart, be Thou the king of my heart forever.

2. Ps. The washing of feet. O, Jesus, wash and purify my impure heart. Give me Thy tender, magnanimous, patient charity for my sisters.

3. Ps. The Last Supper. Communicate spiritually with the apostles from the Hand of Jesus. Lord, even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the master's table. *Te Deum* as a thanksgiving for the spiritual communion.

LAUDS.

1. *Dominus regnavit.* Agony of Jesus. The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voices. Wonderful are the surges of the sea, wonderful is the Lord on high. The Almighty God lies upon the ground in the agony of death and sweats blood! O, Jesus, I am the guilty cause of this.

2. *Jubilate.* Jesus is taken prisoner. Treason of Judas, flight of the other apostles. *Scitote quoniam ipse est Deus*—Know that He is God—and He lets himself be bound by His enemies! O, Jesus, what pain for Thy loving Heart, that Thy disciples have all left Thee!

3. *Deus, Deus Meus.* How often have I also offended Thee, O Jesus, whilst Thou didst give me the greatest proofs of Thy love? O, ingratitude!

4. *Deus misereatur nostri.* Jesus is ill-treated in prison. O, terrible night! O, Jesus, I unite my prayers and penances with Thy sufferings to make reparation for sins committed during the night.

5. *Benedicite.* Herod and his court mock Jesus, who is clothed in a white garment of derision. O, eternal wisdom, what pain dost Thou endure for me! Yes, the more they mock Thee, just so the more zealously will I sing Thy praise.

6. *Laudate.* Jesus is placed beside Barrabas, who is preferred to Him. O, despised Jesus! How often have I neglected Thee for creatures! But now Thou art my only Love. My God and my All.

7. *Cantate Domino.* The scourging. O, Jesus, at what an awful price hast Thou atoned for the sins of the world! "They have added to the grief of my wounds." "They have heaped wound upon wound, laceration upon laceration."

8. Hymn. Crowning with thorns. For our sins He has taken upon His head a crown of plaited thorns.

9. *Benedictus. Ecce Homo.* He has neither form nor beauty. They cry, "Away with Him. Crucify Him."

THE WAY OF THE CROSS FOR THE DIVINE OFFICE.

PRIME.

1. Ps. Deep recollection. Who suffers? The Infinite, Eternal, Immense, Almighty, Holy—God Himself in human nature. For whom? For a worm, a malefactor, a faithless spouse of Christ. Why? For love. O, holy angels, St. Mary Magdalene, St. John, testify to the sufferings and love of my Savior. You holy penitents, Adam and Eve, all you saints of God, touch my heart, inflame my love, obtain for me tears of compassion and repentence. O, mother of my Redeemer, whom my sins have made the mother of sorrows, let me at thy side follow thy divine Son on His bloody way to Calvary.

2. Ps. The condemnation of Jesus. He stands in blood-stained garments, bound, before the heathen judge. *God* is judged and condemned by man, Holiness by a sinner, the Creator by a creature! How often have I decided against Him!

3. Ps. Jesus takes the Cross upon His lacerated shoulders. O, Jesus, how canst Thou bear that heavy cross pressing into Thy wounds? O, amazing love!

TIERCE.

1. Ps. First fall of Jesus beneath the cross. For my sins committed while I was still in the world. O, fall, made most painful on account of the crown of thorns, the wounds

of the scourging and the weight of the cross! What terrible penance for my sins!

2. Ps. Jesus meets His blessed mother. Throw thyself at Mary's feet. O, mother, what have I done! Pardon me!

3. Ps. Simon of Cyrene is forced to help Jesus. O, my forsaken Redeemer, how often have I refused to bear the cross of my vocation when I followed my own will! O, Jesus, I embrace with my whole heart Thy holy will and all that Thou dost desire of me.

SEXT.

1. Ps. Veronica wipes from the Face of Jesus Blood, spittle and filth. O, my Savior, permit me to wipe Thy Face with tears of compassion and repentence.

2. Ps. Second Fall. My sins since I have been in the convent. Fall at Jesus' feet. O, torment—O, love. What an array of infidelities! Thou dost atone for the offences I commit.

3. Ps. The weeping women. Would that I could weep over Thy Passion, over my sins and those of my brethren! O, give me these precious tears. Give me the consolation of true peace of heart.

NONE.

1. Ps. Third fall. My sins since the last confession. So dreadfully dost Thou suffer for my sins, O, Jesus! Rather to die than to sin anew. Repentance.

2. Ps. The stripping. Too much, O, my Savior, too much! Too much love, too much Blood, too much torment! One drop of Blood were enough and Thou givest all!

3. Ps. The crucifixion. Ungrateful, unfeeling soul, cast thyself down before Thy Savior. He atones for thy offences. He expiates thy frivolity, thy self will! O, my crucified Redeemer, forgive, forgive me!

VESPERS.

JESUS ON THE CROSS.

1. Ps. God has so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. For slaves, for sinners hast Thou given Thy Son, O heavenly Father! The Son of God suffers for me! What insults, what torment! He is publicly executed for me. O, wonder, the Son of God sheds His Blood on the cross that ungrateful, perfidious sinners may be saved and that floods of mercy, grace and blessing may flow upon them! O, wonder, O, wonder, O, wonder of divine love!

2. Ps. Jesus covered with wounds. See, my soul, a wonder which the world has never seen; the Son of God hangs upon the cross quite covered with wounds and blood; His whole body is like to a piece of raw, bloody flesh, only here and there covered with a bit of torn skin. A bloody figure! Weep, my soul, weep. O, Jesus, Jesus!

3. Ps. Jesus nailed by the hands and feet. The Son of God hangs for three long hours naked on the cross, horribly stretched out and fastened with three thick nails through the hands and feet. O, dreadful torture of being thus suspended, O, pain of the hands and feet! O, love beyond compare! O, love without measure! O, love of an incarnate God, how gloriously dost thou triumph on the cross!

4. Ps. Jesus on the cross with the crown of thorns. What horrible anguish! The blessed head of Jesus is pierced

with dreadful thorns, the sharp points stick with maddening pain into the very skull itself. O, agony of death! O, Jesus, from the greatness of Thy pain I learn the greatness of Thy love!

5. Ps. The holy Face of Jesus once the joy of the angels, is horribly deformed, swollen, covered with Blood which trickles down between the thorns, defiled with spittle and filth! O, who can grasp the wonders of the love of God! *Magnificat.* The thirst of Jesus. O, torturing thirst of my Savior! Thy tongue cleaves to the palate. He, who created the rivers and the seas, cannot get a drop of water to quench His thirst—only vinegar and gall are given Him. Ah, how often have I given Thee but bitterness to drink. O, Mary, mother of sorrows, help me through thy great song of praise to make reparation for my ingratitude, my malice and for the sinners of the whole world for whose salvation my Jesus thirsts.

COMPLINE.

Confiteor at the foot of the cross with Magdalene.

1. Ps. The dereliction of Jesus. This was the height of anguish. O, my Savior, when I see Thee so forsaken, I know not what to say! As the suffering, so great is the love. O, Jesus, who can withstand the mighty language of Thy divine love? All, all will I forsake for Thy love, my own will, my honor, my ease, all my inclinations.

2. Ps. O, eternal wisdom, King of glory, Ruler of heaven and earth, into what depths of humiliation has Thy wonderful love for us sinners led Thee! Thou diest between two criminals out of love for me, miserable sinner. O, excess of love!

3. Ps. The Body of Jesus lies in Mary's lap. O, most sorrowful mother, with this sword have my sins pierced thy heart. Help me to do penance.

4. Ps. Burial of Jesus. O, Jesus, I kiss in spirit Thy hands and feet, Thy holy head and all Thy dislocated limbs, these bloody pledges of Thy infinite love for me. Epitaph, "Here rests love." I will rest here with Him.

MEDITATIONS ON THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

MATINS.

Preparation:

O Love which has no equal!

O marvel which no wisdom can fathom!

So incomprehensible and yet so true.

My Jesus lies upon the altar to give Himself as food to my soul on this earthly pilgrimage.

Invitatorium. (1) O, holy angels, who surround this altar and behold Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and adore Him with profoundest reverence and most ardent love, obtain for me light and strength to join in your hymns of praise with ardent love and profound humility. (2) For *my* sake, not for yours, is Jesus here present. (3) My holy vocation imposes upon me the sweet duty of performing an angel's service before the Blessed Sacrament by day and night, notwithstanding my nothingness, my countless faults, my ingratitude and my coldness. (4) O, Jesus, I am sorry from the bottom of my heart, pardon me! O, that I could perform my angel's service before Jesus with angelic purity, with the intelligence of the cherubim, the love of the seraphim, the zeal of all the angelic choirs! *Venite exultemus Domino!* Come, holy angels, let us sing the praises of Jesus!

FIRST NOCTURN.

The Blessed Sacrament a marvel of omnipotence.—Who is present?

First psalm. *God* Himself—therefore profoundest reverence.

Second psalm. My omnipotent *Creator* on whom I continually depend—humble adoration.

Third psalm. My *Redeemer* who hung upon the cross for me—heartfelt love and gratitude.

Lessons. My omniscient *Judge*—fervor and fidelity.

SECOND NOCTURN.

A marvel of wisdom.—How is He present?

First psalm. Under the form of bread—a *God!*—admiration.

Second psalm. Exposed to the insults of men—reparation.

Third psalm. Even His Humanity is hidden, His love only appears—love for love.

Lessons. What a sacrifice for my sake.—What do I do for Thee?

THIRD NOCTURN.

A marvel of love. Why is He present?

First psalm. For *me,* a worm of the earth, an ungrateful, abominable sinner, an unfaithful spouse of Christ—humility, contrition.

Second psalm. Jesus wishes to be *all* to me—desire.

Third psalm. Light and strength, teacher and model, sacrifice and food.

Lessons. O, Jesus, my all! Thou art all mine! I wish to be all Thine—an obedient disciple.

Te Deum. Example of Jesus.—Poverty, humility, obe-

dience, generosity, patience, life of sacrifice, life of prayer—love, love, love!

LAUDS.

Wonderful effects of Holy Communion.

Dominus regnavit. Union with Jesus—with God—the Ruler of heaven and earth—the strong God, who laid the foundations of the earth, *qui non commovebitur.*—The eternal, *parata sedes tua ex tunc, a saecula tu es.* The unchangeable, *elevaverunt,* who reigns in eternal tranquility above all that is changeable.

Jubilate. A hymn of jubilation. O, happiness that awaits me in a few hours! *Scitote*....my God will come to me—*ipse fecit nos*....my Creator; *populus*....my King, my Shepherd. *Laudate*....*quoniam suavis est Dominus, in aeternum misericordia eius.*

Deus, Deus meus. Diminution of the three-fold concupiscence. O, how I long to be entirely freed from it that I may attain to union with Thee! *Sitivit in te anima mea*.... *Sicut adipe*....O, food of my soul! *Et in velamento*....in vain do my enemies lay snares for me, if Thou dost protect me.

Deus misereatur nostri. Increase of sanctifying grace. How wonderfully dost Thou show mercy to us, how superabundantly dost Thou bless us! *Confiteantur*—heartfelt gratitude for the increase of sanctifying grace.

Benedicite. More *light, courage* and *strength* to do good and avoid evil. May the whole creation praise Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament for these precious effects. *Benedicite angeli.* You rays from the Divinity, (*light*) thank Him with me, for me!

Benedicite ignis. (*Courage*) O, Jesus in the most holy Sacrament, Thou burning fire, O, consume in me all that is not Thee! Transform me entirely into Thee! *Benedicat terra.* (Strength.) O, little earth-worm, rejoice! The *strong* God unites Himself to thy weakness. "I can do all things in Him Who strengthens me." What shall be able to separate me, my Love, from Thee? I *must* become holy, as Thou art holy.

Laudate. Holy Communion washes away venial sin. *Laudate . . . omnes angeli . . .* already an angelic state. *Laudate . . . de terra . . .* proof against mortal sin.

Cantate Domino canticum novum—Pledge of a glorious resurrection and—*exultant sancti in gloria*—eternal beatitude.

Laudate Dominum in sanctis eius—Holiness an effect of Holy Communion.

Laudate cum in virtutibus eius—Psalm of jubilation. O, Jesus, I wish for nothing else but Thee!

Hymn. My heart rejoices, Jesus comes! The divine Bridegroom! Hasten to meet Him! O, love like to no other!

Benedictus—Thanksgiving—Desire—qui *visitavit*—the presence of Jesus—*Et unxit*—Tabernacle—*ad faciendam misericordiam*—The holy Sacrifice—*In sanctitate*—Food of the soul, make us holy!

PRIME.

Preparation for Holy Communion. Faith—Adoration.

Deus in nomine tuo—Jesus in the most holy Sacrament, Thou art my God. Thou needst not my goods, but I need Thine. Therefore—*Deus, exaudi orationem meam*—*Volun-*

taric sacrificabo tibi—a complete giving of my whole being —actively and passively.

Beati—Love and desire at the feet of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. *Retribue*—Confession of my own misery. *vivifica me*—my tepidity. *revela*—meditations not well made, prayer without devotion—for how long! *Incola*—alone, without God because without recollection—make good intention. *Concupivit*—hunger and thirst after God. Mercy, O Jesus! I have done much evil—*in omni tempore. Increpasti—maledicti*—I have deserved to be cast away. *Aufer a me opprobrium*—an object of contempt to God, angels, men and even the devil. *Etenim sederunt—et adversum me loquebantur*—even the devils accuse me, and with justice. *Adhaesit pavimento*—from the world Thou hast delivered me, what a worldly spirit I have had even in the cloister! *Dormitavit anima mea prae taedio! ! ! Viam iniquitatis amove a me*—Ah, help me! Have mercy upon me, Thou my only hope! *Viam veritatis elegi*—then I can still amend my life—I will do so! *Adhaesi*—Fervent intention.

Chapter. Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament my King, the King of the eternal kingdom, of glory. But also my Redeemer. Jesus, Giver of grace, calls me.

TIERCE.

1. Ps. What willest thou that I should do for thee? Lord, that I may see, that I know Thee and myself, Thy love, Thy sufferings, Thy forbearance, Thy benefits and graces—and my ingratitude. But—*aquae multae non potuerunt extinguere charitatem.* He thinks of me! He loves me! He weeps for me! He dies for me! He gives Himself to me

in Holy Communion! He loves me unto the end. What can I not expect from His love?

Da mihi intellectum—Knowledge of God's will and of divine things. Spirit of prayer. *Deduc me*—The perfect fulfilling of God's will. *Inclina cor meum*—readiness of heart. *Averte oculos meos*—from worldliness, levity, dissipation, tepidity, indolence. *Statue*—constancy, perseverence. *Ecce concupivi*—ardent desire for perfection. *Et veniat*—Thy mercy, O Lord. *Et ne auferas*—Thy holy inspirations and illuminations—Fidelity. *Et custodiam legem tuam semper*—no voluntary infidelity. *Et ambulabam in latitudine*—peace. Et *loquebar*—guard of my tongue; the virtue of silence. *Et meditabar*—ever to walk in Thy presence. *Et levavi manus meas*—work, prayer.

2. Ps. My God, I believe that Thou art present in the Blessed Sacrament, true God and true Man. The God-man! My Creator and Preserver! My Father and only Benefactor! My crucified Redeemer, my All, come, O, come!

3. Ps. O, Jesus, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come to me—because of Thy greatness and my littleness—because of all the sins of my religious life—of my whole life. I repent of all my sins from my whole heart, pardon me for the sake of Thy love in the Blessed Sacrament. Give all and Thou shalt find All!

SEXT.

The sufferings of Jesus renewed in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

1. Ps. The holy species are as the garment of the Lord. Thy mercy for us, O Jesus, has laid upon Thee in

the most Holy Sacrament the white garment of the holy species.

2. Ps. O God, hidden in the Blessed Sacrament, what humiliations, what scorn, what contempt and ill-treatment does this disguise bring upon Thee!

3. Ps. Barrabas or Jesus! Ah, Jesus, still is all else ever preferred to Thee, our enjoyments, the most trifling and mean, to Thee, our God, our Savior, Who loves us so wonderfully.

NONE.

1. Ps. Scourging of Jesus by sin, by which man, the tabernacle of Jesus, is profaned.—Expiation.

2. Ps. Renewing the crown of thorns by sins of the head; pride, unbelief, willfulness, ill-will, sinful designs, contempt of God, of His Church and of her ordinances and regulations, of her priests, and especially contempt of and insults toward the Sacrament of love.

3. Ps. O, my Redeemer, offended and insulted in the most Holy Sacrament, receive this our song of praise in expiation, and give me the grace ever to celebrate it with a heart wounded with love.

VESPERS.

1. Ps. *Ecce Homo—Ecce Agnus Dei.* The cry of the fallen away Catholic: "Away with Him!" O, my Jesus, how is the excess of Thy love repaid!

2. Ps. Spiritual Communion in reparation. O, deeply offended Jesus, may I offer Thee my heart as a dwelling place, since the world rejects Thee? O, come into my heart,

I open it wide to Thee; I chose Thee for my King, my All. To Thee I give all that I have and am eternally.

3. Ps. Jesus carries His cross, in the Holy Sacrament, that is, the ingratitude of men, for nearly 1900 years. The current of our sins cannot quench the fire of His love.

4. Ps. The holy Face of Jesus in the most Holy Sacrament is offended by the irreverence of the faithful when in church. "O, how terrible is this place, this is no other but the house of God and the gate of heaven!"

5. Ps. Renewing of the stripping. The little Thou dost receive from us in return for Thy gifts, O Jesus, the avarice and malice of men often takes from Thee by robbing and sacrilege.

Magnificat. O, Mary, to the good most lovely and gracious, but to the evil formidable as an army in battle array, prevent thou these crimes especially in the churches and religious houses of our own city.

COMPLINE.

1. Ps. Renewal of the Crucifixion by unworthy Communions. Jesus is thus crucified in our hearts in the Sacrament of His love. Act of reparation.

2. Ps. Renewing of the wounds by cold, indifferent, distracted Communions. What are these wounds in Thy hands and feet? "With these was I wounded in the house of those who loved me."

3. Ps. The Heart of Jesus is pierced by wretches who stick pins and an awl through the holy Host.

4. Ps. The burial of Jesus. In how many churches where the doors are locked does Jesus rest alone and for-

gotten not only during the night but also during the greater part of the day. Reparation for the neglect of Easter Communions.

Hymn. Thanksgiving for all the graces and benefits received during the day through the Blessed Sacrament. Offering of the night's rest to His honor.

Tu autem. I believe that Thou art present in the most Holy Sacrament, O Jesus, and for this my faith I am prepared to lay down my life.

In manus tua. I hope in Thee, my Eucharist God, and give myself full of confidence entirely to Thee.

Visita. Come into my heart, O Jesus, possess it entirely and dwell therein with Thy holy angels.

Antiphon B. M. V. Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, mother and model of adorers, pray for us who have recourse to thee.

MEDITATIONS ON THE BITTER PASSION OF JESUS.

MATINS.

FIRST NOCTURN. THE AGONY.

First psalm. Jesus sees the sins of the whole world—my sins—my religious life, so long, so negligent notwithstanding so many graces which would have sufficed to make a saint of me. The horrors of all sins rest upon Him, as if He Himself had committed them. Sorrow of Jesus because of the offence against God, the harm done to immortal souls created after His own image and loved by Him so tenderly.

Second psalm. Jesus sees before Him the reparation He must make; the whole extent of His suffering, His ignominy, His terrible death on the cross. His sacred Humanity shudders.

Third psalm. Ingratitude of men, negligence, coldness, forgetfulness of God; wickedness and hatred of Him. Few appreciate the sufferings of Jesus. Jesus saw also my ingratitude. He saw the uselessness of His Passion for so many; the eternal loss of so many souls. His bloody sweat. O Jesus, pardon the share I had in it!

SECOND NOCTURN.

First psalm. Jesus goes forth to meet His suffering. Love urges Him.

Second psalm. Treason of Judas. The loving Heart of Jesus wounded by the traitor's kiss.

Third psalm. Jesus taken prisoner and bound. Ill treatment on the way.

THIRD NOCTURN.

First psalm. O, ye heavens, be ye very desolate! God is struck in the Face!

Second psalm. Peter denies his Master. My likeness to Peter. Like him I am consecrated to God, particularly privileged by Him, endowed with many graces, have been in His company for so long a time, more beloved by Him than are millions of other souls. I should be a mediator between God and the world; I am called to sanctity and a throne in heaven, and yet how often have I denied Jesus by my life, not through fear of death, but for some trifle of human respect! Peter went out weeping bitterly—my model of repentence.

Third psalm. Jesus in prison. O, terrible night! Jesus left to sinners! It is my sins which torture Him so terribly.

LAUDS.

1. *Dominus regnavit.* The Lord of heaven and earth, the eternal Wisdom, is mocked as a fool by Herod and his court. Jesus falls and is dragged about on the ground.

2. *Jubilate.* "Know that He is God" and He is placed in comparison with Barrabas. Sanctity itself with a criminal!—with me! Jesus shall die that I may live! O, heavenly Father, what love!

3. *Deus, Deus meus.* Jesus is scourged. O, that my tears might flow as fast as Thy Blood! Thy sacred Body is one wound—*one* wound of love!

Deus misereatur nostri. Jesus crowned with thorns. *Terra dedit fructum suum.* O, sharp, painful, poisonous thorns of my sins! How cruelly you have pierced the head of Jesus, how painfully you have wounded His Heart! O, Jesus, and Thou hast mercy on us—behold the work of love!

4. *Benedicite.* Ecce Homo. Jesus sentenced to the death of the cross—the Son to be offered for the slave—the sinner! O, excess, O, climax of love!

5. *Laudate.* Jesus carries His cross. Thy sacred Body is torn with scourges, how then canst Thou carry the cross, O, my Jesus? And on the painful wound of Thy sacred shoulder!

6. *Cantate Dominum canticum novum.* The crucifixion. O, torture! O, love! O, sin!

7. Hymn. The cross is raised with Jesus upon it. He is hanging from the nails in those terrible wounds! Thus far has love brought Thee, O, my Jesus!

8. *Benedictus.* Jesus on the cross in nameless agony of body and soul—Jesus dies for love. O, incomprehensible miracle of love! Love has vanquished Him, love has gained the victory over God! O, my crucified Jesus, let Thy love at last wholly triumph over me, over my will, my judgment, my memory, all.

Love has given Thee the cross, may the cross give me Thy love.

THE LITTLE HOURS.

PRIME.

First psalm. Jesus the infinite God is present in the Blessed Sacrament. The blindness of men.

2. Astonishment of an enlightened soul.
3. The hidden majesty—the joy of heaven.

TIERCE.

1. Jesus always remains present in the Blessed Sacrament. Treatment which Jesus received from men while still on earth.
2. Excess of love. Ingratitude of men toward Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.
3. Jesus remains there *always* for love of us. How long do we remain?

SEXT.

1. Humility of Jesus in the Blesed Sacrament. God in human form—God under the appearance of bread.
2. Folly and blindness of pride. Humiliation at the sight of an annihilated God.
3. God trodden under foot. Sins of pride committed in churches in presence of the Blessed Sacrament—Reparation.

NONE.

1. Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament our All—Fountain of grace—Our King.
2. Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament our Father—Shepherd. Think only of the love of God, love only Him, make known His love to all.
3. Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament our Judge—Advocate—Physician. God only, in life, in death and after death.

VESPERS.

First psalm. Come, O Spirit of understanding, enlighten my soul, that I may rightly understand Thy mysteries, for the sake of my own salvation, and that I may thereby attain to the knowledge of Thee as well as of the Father and the Son.

Second psalm. Come, O Spirit of counsel, guide my heart in all my works and duties, lead it to all that is good, keep it from all evil, direct me and be with me in all doubts, that I may always do what is right and may not miss my final end.

Third psalm. Come, O Spirit of fortitude, take up Thy dwelling within my heart, encourage it in all afflictions, strengthen it in all sufferings and adversities, support it in all temptations, that it may never displease Thee more.

Fourth psalm. Come, O Spirit of knowledge, enlighten and teach me that I may value rightly the vain and transitory things of this world, that I may use them only for Thy greater glory and my own salvation.

Fifth psalm. Come, O Spirit of piety, inflame my heart with true devotion and love for God, my Lord, that I may always seek Him with fidelity, find Him by love and possess Him eternally.

Hymn. Come, O Spirit of the fear of the Lord, help me to abhor and to fly sin above all things, to repair the past by true and heartfelt contrition and severe penance, and never again to commit a voluntary fault.

Magnificat. Come, O Spirit of wisdom, take possession of my heart and of my will, and teach me so to contemplate heavenly and eternal things that I may seek and

love them more than all earthly goods, and that my heart may be inflamed with the pure love of God.

COMPLINE.

Confiteor. Confession of our faults at the Feet of Jesus with Mary Magdalene.

First psalm. Magdalene anoints Jesus for the last time. To do our utmost to thank God for all benefits received on this day and to repair our faults, and therefore recite this last Hour with special fervor.

Second and third psalms. Jesus washes the feet of His disciples. Preparation for Holy Communion by humility and desire.

Fourth psalm. Jesus institutes the most Blessed Sacrament. Act of faith in His real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament.

Tu autem. Spiritual Communion.

Conclusion. Nothing shall separate me from the love of Jesus, not even sleep. O, that I could say with the bride in the Canticle: I sleep but my heart watches.

BEFORE THE TABERNACLE.

The soul kneels before the tabernacle; angels hover near; the little door is opened by the hand of an angel, and Jesus, inexpressibly sublime and lovely, comes forth. O, holy angels, unite with me to praise and adore my Savior. Holy father St. Francis, holy mother St. Clare, holy mother St. Colette, pray for me. Speak, O my Jesus, I am here to listen to Thy sweet voice. Jesus: My Child, with everlasting love have I loved Thee, I have chosen Thee from among thousands. I became Man and died upon the cross in unutterable torment to redeem thee from sin, from the world and from the knowledge of the world. From sin—where wouldst thou be if I had not preserved thee from sin and drawn thee out of thy tepidity? From the world and its sufferings, cares and troubles. What a peaceful, tranquil life in the cloister! From the knowledge of the world—thou canst but suspect the dangers and deceptions of the world, how unhappy it makes its votaries both in time and in eternity. I have chosen thee; nothing great was done on thy part, thy penance is less painful than that of the children of the world. I have called thee by thy name, thou art Mine. I have not called thy sister, so many other virgins, many who so ardently longed for it, but thee, the least, the most miserable. And why? Thou hadst more need of it, thou wast in great danger perhaps of being eternally lost. Must I not acknowledge with our holy father St. Francis: "This comes to me from the eyes of the great King."—Perfect contrition.

Jesus: But now thou art Mine, I have espoused thee. Thy will and My will are one, My life should be thy life. I have freed thee from riches, else thou couldst not be Mine, for I had not whereon to lay My head. I have withdrawn thee from the pleasures of the world, for if thou wouldst be Mine thou must go the way of the cross as I did. I have crucified thee to the world and the world to thee, for to be Mine thou must be nailed to the cross with Me. I have led thee into solitude and have enclosed thee within these walls, that unmolested thou couldst in silent contemplation fix thy gaze upon Me. Be thou, therefore, entirely Mine. Let thy memory, thy understanding, thy heart, thy whole self be entirely Mine. Rest in holy contemplation in My love. Wake not My beloved until she desires.

I have chosen thee for My spouse; My richest and choicest graces are at thy command, let us now celebrate anew the spiritual nuptials.

Soul: O, Jesus, am I really Thine? Yes, if Thou art mine, I may call myself Thine, Thine, entirely Thine for all eternity. Thou mine and I Thine! Is it true, my Jesus, art Thou really mine?

Jesus: Yes, thou Mine and I thine, whatever is thine is Mine, and what is Mine is thine.

Soul: O, marvel! O, happiness! O, love! Yes, my Jesus, all that I have shall belong to Thee, to Thee, Thine forever! What is it that is Thine, O my divine Spouse?

Jesus: Heaven with all its magnificence and all created things are Mine, Mine are all the treasures of grace and holiness. Even here upon earth thou as a faithful spouse shalt have a foretaste of the celestial happiness, in the wine

of My love which I will give thee when thou shalt have died to all sensual pleasures.

Out-pouring of the heart—astonishment, gratitude, unreserved oblation, unlimited generosity, everlasting love.—Resolutions.

MOTIVES FOR CONTRITION—(FOR CONFESSION).

A. Contrition through fear—my own detriment.

1. Had the Lord not been my helper, my soul would now be in hell.

2. By my sinful life I have lost so many graces, innumerable merits, so many degrees of the Vision of God and of His love and glory. O, my God, I might now have been a saint, and what am I? O, what a loss to the immortal soul which Thou hast given me! Would that with bitter tears of contrition I might weep over my misfortune!

O, my God, I am heartily sorry for all my sins, my lukewarm, sinful life, because I have thereby done so much harm to my soul, and have withdrawn from Thee, my Creator and Lord, the love and glory I owed Thee. I thank Thee for having had patience with me and for not having punished me as I deserved. O, that I had not offended so good a God Who has so mercifully spared me! Thousands and thousands Thou hast cast into hell, and with me Thou hast had patience for so many years.

B. Through grateful love.

1. *Length* of the love of God.—From eternity to eternity.

2. *Breadth.* (a) Creation (b) Thou gavest me the whole world for my use, although Thou didst forsee that I

would abuse Thy creatures for the purpose of committing sin. (c) Thou didst give me an angel to be ever at my side. (d) Thou hast ordered exterior circumstances in a way particularly favorable for me.

3. *Height.* Sanctifying grace. Heaven as a reward.

4 *Depth.* (a) Thy longanimity. (b) The redemption. (c) The Most Blessed Sacrament. O, my God, what hast Thou done for me! And yet Thou art the Lord and I the slave.—Thou art rich and I am poor.—Thou the Judge and I the guilty one.—Thou the Father and I the child. How terrible is my ingratitude. At which should I be more astonished, Thy love or my infidelity?

C. Three questions:

1. Who art Thou, Whom I have offended? The infinitely perfect God Who for His own sake deserves all our love. Who is sufficient unto Himself, but Who nevertheless loves me in so wonderful a manner. I have offended Thee, the infinitely great God, in comparison with Whom all created things appear but as an atom.—I have offended Thee.

2. Who am I who have offended Thee? (a) How insignificant among the millions of men now living upon earth. (b) How do I almost disappear among the millions and millions who have lived and will live until the end of the world. (c) What is all this number of men compared to the legions of holy angels? (d) What are all men and angels in comparison with God? (e) How great is the earth on which I live, how vast the sea, how immeasurable the universe, how great and immutable the heavenly bodies, and yet this is all as nothing compared to the most High. Alas! where re-

mains that little point "I," who have dared to rise up against Him?

3 What benefit did I derive from sin? Did I gain the whole world or at least a kingdom? Or would fidelity to Thee have cost me terrible tortures or a bitter death? Does sin obtain for one a quiet, peaceful life? Alas! nothing of all this; on the contrary, remorse of conscience, bitterness, painful regret, great harm to my soul—these are the consequences of my sins. Moreover, fidelity to Thee would make me inexpressibly happy, not only for eternity, but even in this life; and it costs but a few sacrifices which are sweetened by Thy love. And yet I have offended Thee, O, my God, so often!

D. Seven questions:

1. Where did I sin? Before Thy eyes—in Thy presence.

2. With what? With the gifts of Thy love.

3. When? Whilst Thou wast occupied with my welfare.

4. How often? I cannot count the times.

5. How long? During almost my whole life.

6. How? With greatest indifference.

7. Why? Alas! my God, Thou supreme Good, frequently for the sake of the most trivial things, often for the sake of wicked things, always because I would not conquer myself; so little did I love Thee!

E. What does a sin contain in itself?

1. Temerity towards Thee, the omniscient and omnipresent, towards the most Holy and Just, towards the Al-

mighty, Who holds my life within His hand, and Who will one day be my Judge.

2. Injustice and dishonesty towards Thee, my Creator, my King and my Lord.

3. Ingratitude and insensibility towards Thee, O, God, my Father and most loving Benefactor, my Redeemer, Friend and Brother, my sacramental Savior.

4. Contempt of Thee, the Infinite, Eternal, Incomprehensible, infinitely Perfect, the supreme Good. I preferred myself a miserable worm of the earth to Thee!

And alas! how many sins, what tepidity, how many years of my life lost, in spite of all inspirations and special graces! Father, I have sinned before heaven and before Thee, I am no more worthy to be called Thy child. I knew well enough Who Thou wast and what Thou hadst done for me, and also what sin is, and yet I have committed it. Infidels and heretics may be excused, but not I—I have offended Thee in the full light of faith.

O, my Jesus, as often as I commit sin, I am guilty of Thy bitter Passion, which I renew every time. Ah! pardon me and Thyself preserve me from the least sin. The abyss of my misery calls upon the abyss of Thy mercy. O, abyss of mercy, allow Thyself to be moved by my misery and help me! I turn to Thy mercy, O Jesus—for the sake of Thy mercy, for the sake of Thy Precious Blood, the tears of Thy blessed Mother, pardon me all my sins, my imperfections, the tepidity of my past life, and grant me the greatest possible contrition during all the rest of my life, and the grace to live henceforth all the more holily, the more I have until

now offended Thee. The abyss of my ingratitude and infidelity calls upon the abyss of Thy goodness.

Time passes, eternity draws near. Apparently with hesitation the future approaches—swift as an arrow the present flies—the past stands still for all eternity. Every moment becomes eternity—eternal loss or eternal gain. In every moment I can merit a higher degree of eternal beatitude, and every degree of this beatitude is a new heaven. What an exchange, for a passing moment of time, a never ending beatitude!

What sorrow if at the brink of eternity I shall see that I have not gained perfection, and time is now past for me!

How do the poor souls in purgatory and the damned in hell appreciate time?

Unfruitful resolutions and barren intentions without deeds avail nothing. I must set to work earnestly with decision. Everything urges me; soon time will be no more.

It matters not whether I pray or suffer; all depends on one thing—that I do the will of God, that I glorify Him. If He wishes me to serve Him by suffering, there can be no doubt but that this is the very best for me. Many souls are, by the disposition of God, hindered from praying by their duties or by physical suffering. I am hindered by interior suffering. May His holy will be done in all things! I desire but one thing—light, strength and love to know and to fulfill His most wise and most loving designs, never to offend Him, but to please Him perfectly in all humility of heart and detachment from self. I will endeavor to suffer joyously and with perfect conformity to God's holy will, and simply because it thus pleases Him. Fiat! Fiat! What

is it I seek by prayer and contemplation but to be most intimately united with God? But if He wishes that I should attain to this end not by means of prayer but by suffering and desolation? He is not bound to any method but can unite the soul with Himself when and how He pleases. Perhaps it is just by these very interior sufferings which He allows to come upon me that He wishes to cleanse me from all self-love, self-will, self-esteem and confidence in self and lead me to perfect love. It all comes from the hand of the omniscient, omnipotent and merciful God and therefore can only be for my good. Even if this were not so, I nevertheless willingly accept it because it is God's will, and that God's will should be accomplished is better than for me to become a seraph. O, my God, I offer myself entirely to Thy divine will, Thy will be done in me whether I live or die. My only consolation and my greatest joy is that Thy will be accomplished in me.

WORK.

On no account would I wish to be without work. Anyone who has had the care of souls knows that nothing is better calculated to exercise humility, sisterly charity and all other virtues. With holy poverty is most closely united holy labor, as it may most justly be called, and very fittingly does the chapter on work follow that on poverty in our Rule. Both are despised by the spirit of the world, but both have been ennobled by the example of our dear Savior. By them we become more like unto Jesus—"I am in labors from my youth." Jesus from His Childhood earned His bread in a workshop in the sweat of His brow. If God had called me to one of those Orders in which the ordinary and hard work is done by lay sisters, I think that I would have been happy there also, but I would have entered as a lay sister. Or if, being a choir sister in such an Order, I were to hear of another in which all had the privilege of taking part in the common work, I would not be able to suppress a feeling of holy envy.

HUMILITY.

To be humble is a great art.

To seem humble is but vanishing smoke.

To become humble is a great blessing.

To remain humble is a master-stroke.

Jesus once said to Bl. Margaret Mary Alacoque: "Know that the prayer of those who are submissive and deny themselves is more pleasing to me than interior meditation and all other contemplation, however holy these may seem."

My child, seek to convince thyself that thou hast come to me in the cloister that being cut at by all thou mayest be carved into shape.

The following are signs of pride according to the teaching of St. Bernard, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Anselm and other saints:

1. Curiosity, which boldly pushing itself forward everywhere, would see, hear, inquire into, read, examine and know all. Modesty of the eyes and a modest reserve of conduct seem to be things quite unknown to many.

2. Levity and lack of reserve in speaking. This shows itself not only in much unnecessary talking but also in rash judgments of persons, conditions and regulations.

3. An absurd and silly gaiety.

4. A decided inclination to praise oneself and to boast.

5. A certain singularity. The proud make use of certain extraordinary practices that they may appear holy in the eyes of others.

6. Presumption, which leads one to consider oneself as better than others.

7. An over-esteem of oneself, by which one thinks he is called to higher and more honorable things.

8. The excusing of ones sins and faults.

9. A deceitful confession. When the proud man can find no way out by excusing himself, he makes a show of repentence in order to appear contrite and thus escape punishment.

10. Disobedience towards superiors.

11. A wrong spirit of independence. The proud man will do as he pleases.

12. A custom of sinning which contains in itself contempt of God.

ADVANTAGES OF HUMILITY.

1. He who is humble has the surety that the grace of God will never fail him. "God withstands the proud but to the humble He gives His grace."

2. God comes to the help of the humble in all their needs. The Lord is near to those whose hearts are troubled, and He delivers those who are humble of heart.

3. God rejects not even the greatest sinners so long as they are humble. Though God hates sin in the extreme, yet humility is so pleasing to Him, that for its sake He will spare the sinner. St. Gregory, therefore, counts humility as the safest mark of predestination.

4. The humble receive from God the precious gift of wisdom. "Where humility is, there also is wisdom."

5. The hearts of the humble are filled with a heavenly

peace. "Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart and you shall find rest unto your souls."

6. Humility is the safest protection against all the assaults of the enemy. "He who would vanquish the devil girds and arms himself with humility, for before this Lucifer takes his flight and hides himself as a snake escapes into its hole."

7. To the humble will be imparted in the heavenly kingdom, immeasurable glory. "He who humbles himself as a little child, he is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

HUMILITY TOWARDS GOD.

Our humility towards God consists in observing three things:

1. That we acknowledge God to be our Creator, Lord and Judge, and obey Him in all things. If we have sinned we must immediately and from our whole heart repent and seek to amend.

2. We should resign ourselves to the punishment which God imposes upon us with humility and without complaint.

3. We should never dare to raise ourselves up proudly on account of our good deeds and the gifts of God. Rather should we acknowledge that we have received nothing on account of our merits; for our election, calling, justification and future glory are imparted to us out of the pure goodness of divine love. Therefore, should we humbly and sincerely thank God for all good gifts. "He who would truly reckon up his merits before Thee, O Lord, what has he to bring forth but Thy Gifts?" *

* St. Hildegarde.

HUMILITY TOWARDS OUR NEIGHBOR.

1. Towards our equals.

Every one should be inclined to esteem others more highly than himself. "In humility each esteems the others more highly than himself."* We should meet our neighbor with all regard, sympathy and friendliness. The faults and weaknesses of our neighbor, yes, even the offenses which many times may be committed against us by others we should bear with patience and not return evil with evil, but with good. True humility also obliges us always to be mild and discreet in our judgment of our neighbor. If one has openly offended or even sinned grievously, that does not give us the right to harshly condemn him. St. Bonaventure says: "Thou shalt condemn no one, despise no one, even though he be known publicly as a great sinner; for thou knowest not what his end will be. God is powerful enough to destroy the godless and wicked in His own good time. Thou shouldst wish to judge thyself in this world, not others. If thou canst not do this, then must thou be convinced that pride is a vice in which thou dost surpass all others, because thou canst not even see thine own misery."

2. Towards superiors.

Humility demands of subjects that they show themselves respectful and obedient toward their superiors. They should ever show towards them esteem, politeness, affability and a desire to oblige. But it is particularly by obedience that the humble reveal that they have the true dispositions of a subject. A forced and therefore disobliging and negligent obedience is a mark of a proud spirit. He who is truly

* St. Augustine.

humble will show respect and obedience not only toward the higher superiors, but also toward the lower, because by the light of faith he acknowledges in them the representatives of God.

3. Humility in relation to oneself.

(a) Every one should have his own misery before his eyes and not only his innate or later contracted wants and deficiencies, but chiefly he should realize his sinfulness, that is, he should carefully notice what and how many sins he commits, even though they be only venial sins. He should also have an attentive eye to his evil inclinations in order to find out toward what subject they aim and how strong they are. Then will he see how many and great sins he would have committed if God's mercy had not graciously preserved him from such misdeeds. Certainly this is a very effectual means for exterminating pride and fostering humility.

(b) One must look to it that his whole conduct and demeanor, his voice, walk, looks, movements, words and answers, show forth modesty and humility. Just as such outward things sometimes bear the stamp of arrogance, so can they also become subject to humility.

(c) Humility is promoted and strengthened by choosing those occupations which seem mean and contemptible in the eyes of the world, although good and useful in themselves. So one reads of most of the saints that they preferred the lowest services in their convents. They usually went about in poor, worn out and patched clothing. All these practices oppose the movements of pride and further the growth of humility.

THE SOURCE OF HUMILITY.

Since humility makes men so blessed both here upon earth and in eternity, let us ask ourselves how we must begin that we may obtain a truly humble—that is, little—opinion of ourselves? How did the saints win so deep a self-knowledge? This mystery is very high and at the same time very simple; one can express it in two words—Jesus Christ. Our divine Redeemer was the source from which the saints continually drew the clear, pure and salutary water of humility. Jesus Christ was the abyss into which the saints sank. With Him, through Him and out of love for Him they descended into the depths of self-contempt and humiliation. They meditated unceasingly on His holy life and bitter Passion. They strove ever to form themselves inwardly and outwardly according to this divine model. Continually they sought to make the sentiments, the teaching, the interior dispositions, the virtues and actions of their divine Master their own. To this end was that continual, almost uninterrupted prayer of the saints, a prayer which consisted chiefly in calling on the divine mercy. Thus have the saints acted, and this is the great secret of becoming a saint in a short time.

Daily opportunities of practicing humility.

1. Not to interrupt in a forward manner when others are speaking.

2. Not to push oneself forward and seek always to lead the conversation.

3. Not to speak in too loud a tone.

4. Never to give advice in an obtrusive and importunate manner.

5. Not to meddle in matters which do not concern us.

6. Not to give one's opinion of persons and things unasked and in a forward manner, even when the judgment is not severe.

7. To bear it patiently when others give us no opportunity to speak.

8. Never to speak of oneself without good reason.

9. To avoid all exaggeration in speaking.

10. Never to be guilty of buffoonery, too much joking and immoderate laughter.

11. Not to become impatient or despondent when we have committed a fault or when our works do not succeed.

COLLECTION OF MAXIMS CONCERNING HUMILITY AND THE OTHER VIRTUES.

1. Grant me the grace, O Lord, to be humble, to burn with love for Thee and to quickly mount to sanctity. May I suffer and be despised for Thy sake.

2. God finds not a friend in a sorrowful soul.
St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi.

3. An earnest and prudent spirit will not be distracted at work, but rather will be the more recollected, for he has before his eyes less what he does, than the aim for which he does it. Rogacci.

4. If thou dost happen to commit a fault there is nothing else to be done but sincerely to acknowledge thy fault. If one asks thee what thou dost not know, answer in simplicity that thou knowest it not, and care not to appear wise with the wisdom of this world. St. Vincent de Paul.

5. Christian wisdom consists in judging, speaking and acting as the eternal Wisdom did when clothed with our

mortal flesh, and in all our affairs in deciding according to the light of faith and not according to the fallacious view of the world or the feeble light of our own reason.

St. Vincent de Paul.

6. We should act according to principal and not according to caprice. Anon.

7. The man who is strong to bear injustice and affliction and to suffer for love of God is great in the eyes of God, while the weaker he is in enduring pain and tribulation for God's sake so much the smaller is he in God's sight.

St. Aegidius.

A man should desire nothing, see nothing, hear nothing, speak of nothing but what is for the good of his soul.

8. It is better to work for another than for oneself, because when we work for ourselves, self-love easily creeps in, but this cannot happen when we work for others.

St. M. Magdalene de Pazzi.

9. The foundation of true humility is two-fold:

First. An intense desire to do in all things the will of God, joined with a firm intention never to decline therefrom, no matter what natural hindrances, difficulties or temporal evils might arise.

Second. An undoubting faith that the will of God can in no way be better known than through the superior who stands in God's place and whose orders therefore must be considered as expressing the will of God. Rogacci.

10. Strong, to subdue thyself,
Quick, to make a sacrifice for thy neighbor,
True, to live for love and friendship,
Great, to forgive an enemy.

11. St. John Climacus answers the question: "Who is a good and faithful monk?" as follows: "He who until the end of his life allows no day to slip by on which he does not increase his present fervor, augment his zeal and redouble his old desires and endeavors."

12. The mortification of the flesh is not unconditionally necessary to salvation, nor is it so difficult, but the interior mortification of one's own will and natural inclination to pride is harder and at the same time indispensably necessary in order to acquire Christian virtue.

Bl. Clement Hofbaur.

13. Humility is nothing else than a desire to serve. A soul which, free from self-love, wishes and seeks always and in all things to be subject is truly humble.

14. What thou canst do in a year take not two to accomplish. Walk, run, fly upon the way to God. The pious walk, the wise run, the loving fly to the enjoyment of the divine Majesty. If thou canst run do not walk, if thou canst fly, run not. Bl. Baptista Varani.

15. If Christians knew the value of the cross they would go three hundred miles to find one.

Bl. Louis-Maria de Montfort.

16. O, what a great gift is the cross! Couldst thou understand it, thou wouldst have Masses read, make Novenas at the graves of the saints and undertake long journeys as these great servants of God have done.

17. As long as I have not the spirit of prayer I am not fortunate. St. John Berchmans.

18. The time which one devotes to prayer is in no wise lost for work. God will Himself make it up. Ib.

19. Never art thou more a bosom friend of the Crucified than when thou art crucified with Him. Ib.

20. I can do nothing better than to apply myself with all my strength to the perfect fulfillment of the duties of my state of life; this is for me the will of God; anything higher than this I cannot do. Ib.

21. Thou, O Mary, canst do what thou willst, thou art the Mother of God. St. John Damascene.

22. Mary was chosen, prepared and appointed by God to be a sweet bait to entrap men, especially the souls of sinners. St. Catharine of Sienna.

FERVENT SIGHS OF LOVE.

O, infinite, most high, most blessed Good! What are all the goods of the world, all the honor of this earth, all the delights of the senses, all enjoyments of the spirit, yes, even all the treasures of grace and the immeasurable riches of heaven, what are they all in comparison with Thee? Thou art dearer to me than all these, O Thou my God and my All!

What is dearer to me in heaven and upon earth, what else do I desire but Thee, O God of my heart and my portion forever! Ah, how little in my eyes is all which is not Thee! and what do I desire if I possess Thee? O, nothing in the world. Only grant me Thy Heart, Thy love and I am rich enough! Nothing in the world can ever satisfy my heart, for it was created for Thee, O God of my heart! Fill it, fill it in return, with Thy love, that it may not languish away!

O, what joy and happiness my heart feels at the thought that Thou, my God, art in Thyself the perfect, eternal, almighty, immense, most holy, most blessed and most excellent Being and eternally will remain so! O, how I thank Thee that Thou art He from Whom all that is good, beautiful or excellent in heaven or on earth has its being. All that lives and floats before my eyes is the work of Thy wisdom, the resplendence of Thy magnificence. If my heart now is so inflamed with love to Thee, how will I love Thee then when I will see Thee face to face!

But, "O, late," must I sigh and cry out with the inflamed St. Augustine, "O, late have I loved Thee, late have I known Thee, Thou eternal Beauty!" How is it possible that there was ever a time when I did not love Thee? I knew that Thou wast my God! Ah, I knew but felt it not that I was truly a soul created for Thee and that only the possession of Thee could still the hunger and thirst of my heart for happiness. Is there, indeed, O God of mercy, a dagger which wounds so sharply and cuttingly as this thought pierces my heart? I have not only not loved Thee, I have offended Thee, so often, so grievously, so greatly, so deeply! Ah, what a painful stab for me! How was it possible that I could offend Thee—Thee Who art Love! Ah, what a remembrance, and how it pains me, O my Jesus, when I look upon Thy Heart wounded for me! But now, O Jesus, now I love Thee so fervently! Yes, my Jesus, divine Bridegroom of my soul, I love Thee! I love Thee! Take this confession which my loving heart sends up to Thee in reparation for my former coldness and infidelity. Yes, O Lord, I love Thee! O, that with the glowing love of our holy father St. Francis, our holy mothers St. Clare and St. Colette, of all loving souls, with the glowing love of the seraphim, I could call out these blessed words into the wound of Thy most holy Heart: "My Jesus, I love Thee!!!"

Yes, O my Jesus, before Thee are all my desires, and the sighs of my heart wounded with love are not unknown to Thee. How could Thy Heart so tender, yearning so for love, remain closed to this love-inflamed desire of my heart?

Love once drew Thee from heaven down to earth and holds Thy Heart imprisoned in the Blessed Sacrament. O,

then, so bind my heart to Thee in eternal love and draw it up to Thee in all that I think, desire, do or suffer.

O, that I could buy back with my blood every one of those sad moments in which I did not think of Thee! That from now on until the end I could love Thee constantly and faithfully—should it cost my blood and life, though I suffer all the pains of the martyrs, should my heart be torn from my body, yet will I, with Thy grace, remain true to Thee for evermore.

It is only sin that can tear asunder this bond of love which unites my heart so entirely to Thine, and O, I would rather with St. Catherine of Genoa cast myself into a sea of fire, than to offend Thee, and I would offer Thee all to hinder one single sin—only no more sins! Ah, rather death, rather a thousand times all possible sufferings and torments.

Therefore, if Thou dost foresee, O my Life, that I will ever cease to love Thee and will offend Thee, O, I pray Thee, for the sake of the wound in Thy most holy Heart, let me rather die this instant; for to live and not to love Thee is to me more bitter than the most painful death.

CONSECRATION OF THE COMMUNITY TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

Divine Heart of Jesus, we cast ourselves at Thy feet with feelings of deepest gratitude for all Thy blessings and with burning love for Thy ineffable goodness. That we may fulfill Thy command of June 17, 1689, and may further in our community the reign of Thy adorable Heart, we consecrate to Thee, O Jesus, through the immaculate heart of Mary, queen of angels and Mother of Sorrows, and under the powerful protection of our holy father St. Joseph, our holy father St. Francis and our holy mothers St. Clare and St. Colette, our guardian angels and patron saints, our entire community.

May our convent, like the little house of Nazareth, be the dwelling place of lively faith, deep humility, childlike simplicity, perfect obedience, holy poverty, great mortification, angelic purity, fervent charity, burning zeal for souls, a house of prayer, of discipline and of monastic peace. Be Thou, O divine Heart, the sovereign director of all our interests. We consecrate to Thee, O Jesus, all our thoughts, words and deeds, all our prayers, works and sufferings, our bodies and our souls, all adversities and joys, all the events of our lives, and we pray Thee to pour the richest blessings of Thy Sacred Heart upon our community and upon each member of it, as well those present as those who in future will become members of it, the living and the dead.

We recommend them ever to Thy protection and to the mercy of Thy divine Heart, and should any one of us have had the misfortune to wound Thy holy love, we humbly make reparation for her sin. For the sake of the mercy of Thy divine Heart, O Jesus, receive our reparation and grant her mercy! Bless all religious societies of the whole world, especially the three Orders of our holy father St. Francis and above all our holy Order and all who are connected with it.

Grant to us at all times souls with true vocations. And, O divine Heart of Jesus, may it never happen at any time, that any one should make her profession in our convent whose life will not be a source of consolation and edification to the community!

Bless our novitiate! May it be a nursery of solid virtue. Give to each and every one of us an ardent desire and constant, earnest strife after religious perfection and the grace ever to increase in the spirit of our Order. May there always be some hidden saints in our community.

O, Jesus, help us in the seclusion of the cloister faithfully to imitate Thy hidden life at Nazareth and in the holy tabernacle where Thou dost dwell a victim to Thy love, in our midst. O, Heart of Jesus, Thou sea of mercy and of love, we pray Thee, assist us particularly at the hour of our death. Unite us then more closely than ever before with Thy divine Heart and the immaculate Heart of Thy Mother who is our Mother also.

May Thy divine, most merciful Heart be our dwelling place in life and our refuge at the hour of death. And after we have fallen asleep in Thy divine Heart, O Jesus, may all who have served Thee in our community awake in that Sa-

cred Heart, united for all eternity in the vision and the possession of Thee and in Thy love and praise.

O, Jesus, divine Bridegroom of our souls, in Thy mercy receive with complacency this our consecration, and allow us to be the property of Thy divine Heart in life, in death and for all eternity. Amen.

O, Jesus, we live for Thee, O, Jesus, we die for Thee, O, Jesus, Thine are we in life and death!

POOR SOUL CARDS.

This was the title which Mother Mary Veronica gave to the following practices of virtue arranged according to the days of the month. She wrote each particular virtue with its various practices upon a card, and let her sisters draw these on the day before All Saints, for which day also a card was made out. The reverend mother then exhorted her sisters to the zealous practice of their respective virtues, reminding them to offer these acts for the relief of the suffering souls. Each sister should offer Holy Communion for this intention on the day indicated on her card.

To this day the religious of the communities founded by Mother M. Veronica are eager, at the beginning of November, to draw their Poor Soul cards, and Divine Providence seems wonderfully to ordain that each receives just that virtue the practice of which is most necessary for her in her present state or circumstances.

These cards may also be used during other months, as for instance, during May, for a monthly exercise in honor of the Blessed Virgin, etc.

It is evident that with a few changes not only religious but also seculars can make use of these cards, particularly in sodalities and schools.

PREPARATORY DAY.

STRIVING FOR PERFECTION.

1. Awaken and maintain within your heart a fervent desire to be a saint, cost what it will, and perseveringly beg this grace of God.

2. Think how short is life, how soon the battles, sacrifice and trouble which a holy life costs you will be over—but the reward is eternal.

3. Often think of the heroic example of the saints, and try more and more to imitate them.

4. Do not allow your faults and weaknesses to discourage you, many saints had more to conquer, they were human, as you are; what they could do can you not do with God's grace?

5. Endeavor by true contrition and deep humility to render your heart ever more capable of receiving the grace of God.

6. May the thought of the time you have lost and the graces abused spur you on to make good the loss, as far as you can, by redoubled zeal.

7. "He who is the most humble, is the most holy."—St. Augustine.

8. Have the example of Jesus ever before your eyes, be zealous in all practices of prayer, especially meditation, and walk always in the presence of God.

9. Avoid even the least voluntary infidelity; allow nothing to destroy your peace of heart and let your maxim be always to choose the most perfect.

10. Have a great love of the cross and seek before all else to die to yourself.

I. PUNCTUALITY.

1. Hasten to respond to the first sound of the bell, thinking, "God calls me."

2. Avoid, as far as possible, asking dispensations from the preparation for the divine Office.

3. Try to so manage your work that you may be able to be first in the choir or wherever else obedience or charity calls you.

4. Work so diligently that you may not be obliged on this account to miss any of the spiritual exercises.

5. Do not keep those who need your help waiting, but hasten with friendliness to do what they desire of you.

6. Observe exactly the order of the day and do not deviate therefrom without necessity.

7. Let everything lie when your superior calls you, and say with the pious Samuel, "Here I am, O Lord, for Thou hast called me."

8. Make an especial effort to be punctual when it costs nature some sacrifice.

II. DENIAL OF ONE'S OWN WILL.

1. Perform with especial zeal that work which is opposed to your natural inclinations.

2. Let your superiors appoint your occupations; do not choose them yourself.

3. If you think it is not possible to fulfill some command of a superior, do not say so at once, try first, perhaps with the help of God's grace it can be accomplished.

4. Take care not to show reluctance or dissatisfaction with the commands of superiors.

5. Avoid all replies and objections, all obstinate holding fast to your own will and judgment.

6. Do the will of others, even that of equals and inferiors, as willingly as your own.

7. In indifferent matters yield willingly or at least silently when others do not agree with you but are of the opposite opinion.

8. Daily, during the holy sacrifice of the Mass, offer to God the sacrifice of your own will.

III. DEVOUT RECITATION OF THE DIVINE OFFICE.

1. Make every effort to come punctually to the preparation.

2. Have the various parts of the Office carefully prepared beforehand and reflect upon the means by which you can best preserve devotion.

3. Offer to God every word, every letter as so many million acts of humility, love and of every virtue, for the whole world, especially for the holy Church.

4. Say with particular devotion the preparatory prayer, *Aperi*, considering carefully the sense of the words.

5. During the psalms think that you are standing before the throne of the infinite God singing His praise with the angels, and endeavor to perform this sublime duty with deep recollection and great fervor.

6. Carefully observe every ceremony and faithfully perform the penance appointed for each fault.

7. At every *Gloria Patri* hold yourself ready, with St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi, to give your life for your faith.

IV. POVERTY.

1. Remove from your cell everything superfluous, that you may be poor like Jesus.

2. Withhold from yourself, for the sake of the poor souls, something especially dear to you.

3. Never lose a moment, for time is precious; work diligently and uninterruptedly.

4. Give yourself by preference to the lowest and hardest work.

5. Be careful with everything which is given to you for your use.

6. Observe faithfully the smallest precepts and customs in regard to poverty; let nothing spoil, nothing be wasted—not even a crumb of bread.

7. Whenever you can do so choose the poorest, oldest, meanest and most inconvenient.

8. Desire and long for the smallest cell, the poorest things, the most unassuming duties, out of love for our divine Redeemer, Who out of love for us was poor and in labors from His youth up.

V. CHARITY.

1. In a spirit of faith, regard your sisters as spouses of Christ; honor and love them.

2. Always put the best interpretation on the actions of your sisters.

3. In speaking to them or of them show the esteem you have for them.

4. Never refuse a charitable service when it is at all possible to perform it.

5. Anticipate the needs of your sisters with charity; when you can do so, cheer them, but try to be unnoticed and do all without expecting thanks.

6. Never show yourself unfriendly towards your sisters, but always meet them with charity.

7. Avoid all argumentativeness, all disputes, readily give up your own opinion, or if you cannot do this, at least be silent.

8. Gladly renounce your own inclinations when this will be of advantage to a sister.

VI. SILENCE.

1. During the time of silence speak in a low, soft voice even with superiors.

2. When obliged to speak, avoid unnecessary remarks and many words.

3. Give others no occasion to speak unnecessarily.

4. Be quiet in your actions, avoiding much noise in walking, working, etc.

5. In time of silence abstain from all unnecessary signs and all fun-making and do not encourage these things in others.

6. During recreation avoid loud screaming, shrill laughter and purely worldly conversation; speak of those things which are edifying to others.

7. During strict silence make yourself understood entirely by signs without ever saying a word, and even this as seldom as possible.

VII. FIDELITY IN LITTLE THINGS.

1. Never omit any of your prayers without good reason for so doing, and never perform this duty negligently.

2. Be punctual.

3. Perform all your duties fervently and well.

4. Never allow negligence or indolence to creep in along with the duties of your particular charge.

5. Observe conscientiously every point of the holy Rule and of the constitutions, and also all other points which are recommended.

6. Be especially faithful when the being so will cost you something or cause you some trouble, and thus show Jesus that you truly love Him. This constant fidelity in little things even under many difficulties is no small matter—it is heroism.

7. Correspond faithfully with every inspiration of grace, perhaps upon *this one* your sanctity depends.

VIII. DEVOTION TO MARY.

1. Every morning consecrate yourself to the dear Mother of God, beg her for her blessing, and put all your affairs into her hands that she may purify them, perfect them and offer them to her divine Son.

2. Sometimes kiss your rosary and say, "I am all thine, my good mother, hold me by the hand lest I fall."

3. When you have committed a fault say, "Dear, compassionate mother, I have fallen! Come to my assistance, help me to arise. Offer to Jesus His own divine Heart in reparation."

4. In all your employments pray her to work and to speak with you, to show you how to suffer and in all things to counsel you and assist you.

5. Often pronounce her name with reverence, with your lips or at least in the depth of your heart, and call upon her particularly when danger threatens.

6. Make an inclination whenever you pass her statue or picture.

7. Always keep in your cell a picture of Mary, honor and salute this good Mother as often as you enter, and ask her for her mother's blessing when you leave.

8. Reflect often upon her virtues and try as her child to imitate them, especially her purity, humility and love.

IX. REVERENCE TOWARDS THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

1. Many times during the day make a lively act of faith in the presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

2. Rejoice with your whole heart because of this incomprehensible grace, thank Him for His love and invite Him to come into your heart both by sacramental and spiritual Communion.

3. When at work sometimes turn towards the Blessed Sacrament, salute Jesus and unite yourself to Him by a spiritual Communion.

4. Whenever you pass the tabernacle kneel respectfully and recollect yourself for a moment.

5. Long for the time when you can receive the divine Guest into your heart or at least can tarry in His presence in the choir.

6. While eating your bread at collation, think of your God hidden under the form of bread, Who will come into your heart in the morning.

7. Every evening before going to sleep leave your heart before the tabernacle, praying the angels to love Jesus for you during the night. Offer Him every breath and every beat of your heart as so many acts of love.

X. CUSTODY OF THE EYES.

1. Be modest and reserved in regard to your eyes, especially in the choir, chapter, refectory, novitiate and wherever the community is assembled; do not look up without good reason for so doing.

2. During the day occupy yourself with your own work without looking around at what others are doing.

3. When passing through the house do not look curiously into the cells and other rooms, nor at those who pass you, except to salute them charitably.

4. Never look fixedly into the face of another.

5. Do not look at persons or things outside the enclosure.

6. During meals do not look about at your neighbors, nor at the dishes which are brought in until they are passed to you.

7. During the time of strict silence, do not look at anyone, if this be possible, that you may preserve interior recollection.

XI. DEVOTION TO THE PASSION.

1. Every morning and as often as you leave your cell shut yourself up in the wounds of Jesus.

2. Make daily a fervent meditation on the Passion of our Lord and keep one of the mysteries present to your mind during the day.

3. Unite all your works, but especially your mortifications and sufferings, with the Passion of your Savior.

4. Often look with compassion, gratitude, repentence and love upon your crucifix and incline reverently when passing before this sacred image. Say then, "This is my work! O, Jesus, forgive me!"

5. Rejoice when you have something to suffer, because then you can make a little return to your Savior for His unutterable love, and can offer Him a little relief in His torments.

6. At the sight of different objects which you see during the day, be reminded of the sufferings of Christ; for example, let nails remind you of the piercing of His hands and feet; at the sight of your cord think of the rope with which He was so cruelly bound.

7. Impose upon yourself every day some special mortifications as a penance for your sins which have caused the sufferings of your Savior, and also to expiate the wickedness of the world.

XII. PURITY OF HEART.

1. Endeavor to suppress all inordinate attachments to persons or things, howsoever good and holy they may be.

2. Watch carefully over your interior and exterior deportment, that you may not displease the God of sanctity Whose eyes are upon you.

3. Frequently arouse yourself to contrition for the sins of your past life and whenever you have committed a fault, and protest to God that you are determined rather to suffer the pains of hell than voluntarily to sin against Him again.

4. Strive to banish all thoughts of your relatives and acquaintances in the world.

5. If you receive letters from your relatives do not read them until after the end of this month.

6. Do not desire to hear the news of the world.

7. Daily recommend yourself to the protection of the immaculate Mother of God, reciting for this purpose every morning that formula of consecration to her:

O, my Queen! my mother! I give myself entirely to thee; and to show my devotion to thee, I consecrate to thee this day my eyes, my ears, my mouth, my heart, my whole being, without reserve. Wherefore, good Mother, as I am thine own, keep me, guard me as thy property and possession.

(Indulgence 100 days once a day.)

XIII. THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

1. Often make as firm and lively as possible an act of faith in the omnipresence of God, think that in every place and at every instant of time the Infinite, in His Godhead, is present with you, He surrounds and penetrates your very being, and only by His power are you able to perform any, even the most insignificant, act of body or soul.

2. Therefore, do all that you do with love and reverence, as if you saw God before you.

3. Often offer to Him little acts of devotion, of thanksgiving, of reparation, and pray for yourself and the whole world.

4. Consider all creation in comparison with God as less than a little worm in comparison with the choirs of angels, and invite all to praise and glorify God with you.

5. Hate and fly from every sin as an insult to the most high Lord; strive, on the contrary, and desire most fervently ever to grow more and more in pure love, and soon to attain to perfect union with Him in heaven.

6. Frequently meditate on the infinite perfections of God, and, on the one hand, let your soul rejoice, full of gladness, because of them, and, on the other, let it be penetrated with bitter pain because of the offenses which are committed against our most good God by yourself as well as by other men.

7. Speak to your divine Guest of all your feelings and plans, all your difficulties, griefs, sufferings and joys; in short, try to keep up an uninterrupted conversation with Him.

XIV. THE SPIRIT OF FAITH.

1. Never perform a religious ceremony, as for example, genuflecting, taking holy water, etc., merely through custom.

2. Receive all the regulations of superiors as manifestations of the divine will.

3. Think of your superiors as the representatives of God and of your sisters as the spouses of Christ; honor and love them in Him and for His sake.

4. Extend your zeal for souls to all men as members of the mystical body of Christ, for He has given His life for them amid unutterable sufferings.

5. In the performance of acts of charity and other practices of virtue, do not allow yourself to be guided by nature, but always act from a higher motive.

6. When at prayer, remember that it is your Creator, your God and your Judge with Whom you are speaking; annihilate yourself in the dust before His sovereign majesty.

7. Receive with equal readiness and gratitude, as coming from the hand of God, joy and sorrow. Never complain of unpleasant events, disagreeable weather, etc., for God sends all these things.

8. If any one offends you or trouble comes to you through obedience, think not of the persons, but of God, Who uses these as instruments to give you an opportunity of practicing virtue.

XV. GOOD INTENTION.

1. Every morning say the little prayer concerning the good intention with special devotion, and make this intention as far-reaching and all-embracing as possible.

2. Recollect yourself interiorly before beginning each new work, that you may offer it to God with a pure intention.

3. Often renew the good intention during your work. In such occupations as sewing, sweeping, etc., you can renew this intention at every stitch, at every stroke of the broom, and so on in other works.

4. When engaged in mental work which keeps your mind quite occupied, renew your intention at least every time the clock strikes, or when you begin a new bit of work, or when perhaps obliged to rest for a few minutes.

5. Renew your intention especially when you have fallen into some sin or fault.

6. Renew your intention whenever you perceive, by an exaggerated zeal or a feeling of unrest, that self-love and self-will have crept in.

7. Unite your intention with that of Jesus, Mary and all the saints.

XVI. THE FAITHFUL PERFORMANCE OF EACH DUTY.

1. Begin every work with the pure intention of pleasing God.

2. Perform none of your works with too great haste and satisfaction therein, particularly if it be pleasing to nature or if you have taken it upon yourself of your own accord.

3. Guard yourself from any peevishness, disgust or negligence in regard to occupations which are imposed upon you by superiors or are included among your duties.

4. Do not spoil the perfection of a work by worldly or other imperfect thoughts, judgments, words or actions.

5. Do not let slip by any act of humility, self-denial, charity or of any other virtue for which your work affords an opportunity.

6. Perform all your works in the presence of God.

7. Take care to perform your duties as perfectly as possible exteriorly.

8. Sometimes make your particular examen on the faithful performance of your daily duties.

XVII. RESPECT FOR SUPERIORS.

1. Remember that in your superiors you obey God Himself, Whose place they occupy in your regard; execute their commands with simplicity and fidelity.

2. Think of the divine majesty whenever you appear before your superiors in order to animate yourself to treat with them with the proper reverence and submission.

3. Guard yourself from all excuses or objections, when there is not a weighty reason for them.

4. Be particularly careful to avoid, in the presence of superiors, all loud talking and laughter, all inconsiderate and importunate actions, all immodesty and boldness.

5. Never omit an act of reverence which the customs of the Order prescribe.

6. Keep far from you all arrogance in judging, curiosity and suspicions, pride and desire to contradict.

7. Watch for opportunities to render your superiors some little service.

XVIII. HUMILITY IN REGARD TO ONE'S SISTERS.

1. Regard yourself as the servant of all, as the pack ass of the convent, try, therefore, to perform for your sisters all the charitable services that lie in your power; think yourself unworthy to be the servant of the spouses of Jesus.

2. Desire with all your heart that all others be preferred to you, and rejoice if this comes to pass, for you are, indeed, the least in the house of God, and everyone else is better than you are.

3. In this disposition avoid even the least appearance of superiority and conduct yourself in the choir, refectory, cell, at work, etc., as quietly and modestly, as submissively and unassumingly, as patiently and in as lowly a manner as possible.

4. Do not speak of yourself without very good reason, and never judge uncharitably of others.

5. Never boast of your knowledge and abilities, but rather allow yourself to be instructed by the youngest.

6. Be grateful for the least service rendered you. You should, indeed, serve others and not the spouses of Christ serve you.

7. If you perform an act of humility do not think that you have done something great, but only that which was becoming to you, the least and most imperfect.

XIX. HUMILITY.

1. Think very often of the greatness and majesty of God and sink deep down into your own nothingness and miserable sinfulness.

2. Ask yourself what you are and what you are able to do without God; where were you before you were born and to what will your body return?

3. To what would your sins have brought you if God had not had mercy on you?

4. Think how deeply the only begotten Son of God has humbled Himself for your sake, behold Him in the manger, a helpless Child in a dirty, vile-smelling stall—the apprentice of a carpenter in the workshop at Nazareth—hanging on a cross—under the appearance of bread in the Holy Host—as our food. And you? What is becoming to Him? What to you?

5. Call to mind your past sins, the graces you have thrown away, the time you have lost, your ingratitude towards God, and confess that you deserve every punishment that He could impose upon a creature.

6. Think of your present imperfections, your weaknesses, your tepidity. Do you not deserve that God should vomit you out of His mouth?

7. Despise all human praise, and suppress all vain complacency in regard to yourself, your gifts, virtues, etc.

8. Receive willingly and with joy every neglect and humiliation from others, thank God for these things and offer yourself to Him gladly to bear far greater insults for the love of Him.

XX. SIMPLICITY.

1. Think that God and yourself are alone in the world.

2. Be open as a child with your superiors.

3. Do not think much about yourself or about creatures; but rather think of God.

4. Fulfill zealously all that obedience demands of you, without reflecting upon or judging of the matter.

5. Hate and fly all deceitfulness, slyness, lack of straightforwardness, inquisitiveness, dissimulation and all vanity and desire of applause in your words, conduct and intercourse with others.

6. Seek to please God in everything, without tormenting yourself as to whether you are thereby displeasing men.

7. If you have spoken or acted amiss, do not seek to justify the matter either in your own eyes or in the eyes of others, but after acknowledging your fault before God, leave the rest to Him and direct your whole attention to the fulfillment of your next duty.

8. Never desire to have a place in the hearts of men, but only in the heart of God.

XXI. PATIENCE.

1. If you are tempted to impatience, do not reveal it either by word or in your manner, but bear all for love of God without losing your outward tranquility.

2. Take care in all occurrences to remain as calm and submissive as possible, remembering that nothing happens without the permission of God.

3. If you suffer from some bodily disorder, speak of it with simplicity to your superior without complaining or desiring a remedy, much less asking for this or that particular remedy.

4. Let no one know of your crosses, either through your words or gestures, sighs or any other indications of low spirits. In the time of trouble be more serene than at other times—and this, for the love of God.

5. If you feel provoked and tempted to impatience, try immediately to recollect yourself in God, and shut yourself up within the meek and humble Heart of Jesus.

6. If a sister has offended you, say immediately, "O Jesus, I forgive her for love of You, and I pray You, for love of her to forgive me all my sins." Say nothing to her until your tranquility has returned.

7. Joyfully make use of every opportunity to practice patience, as, for instance, delays, misunderstandings, discomfort or adverse circumstances, dealings with persons who are hard to get along with, etc. These things give you what you need—opportunity for the practice of patience.

XXII. LOVE OF GOD.

1. Immediately upon awaking make a fervent act of love with the desire to continue it during the whole day.

2. Make love the first and principal motive of all your actions.

3. Refer everything to God, even the most ordinary things, as for instance, to eat and sleep in order to gain strength to love God better.

4. Accustom yourself to an ejaculation which turns on divine love and frequently repeat it.

5. Often think on the love of God for you, on the manger, the workshop at Nazareth, on Calvary and on the Blessed Sacrament, and pray Him earnestly to give you in return a burning love for Him.

6. Meditate on the perfections of God that you may know Him ever better, and may love Him for His own sake.

7. Pray with fervor and perseverance that God may give you an ardent love for Himself, and prepare yourself with all your strength for receiving this grace, by self denial, faithfully fulfilling the divine will and the remembrance of the presence of God.

XXIII. MORTIFICATION.

1. Joyfully and without delay make every sacrifice which obedience or charity demands of you, as, for example, to interrupt your prayer to do some work.

2. Bear cheerfully and courageously all the sufferings and difficulties which the severity of the Rule and the rigors of the climate cause.

3. Never be hasty and eager to satisfy the demands of nature, in eating, drinking, warming, etc., but mortify yourself at every moment that you may offer these actions to God with a pure intention.

4. Practice zealously the mortification of the senses, particularly of the eyes and the tongue, and take delight in little bodily chastisements which you can perform unnoticed.

5. Practice all the works of penance which superiors, with a wise regard for your health, allow you.

6. Try to purify your memory, and, as far as possible, to keep it free from everything that is not God or of God, or that is not necessary the better to fulfill your duties.

7. Keep your understanding from all rash and useless judging, from curiosity and dissipation, which things are hindrances to interior recollection.

8. Readily give up your own opinion and your own will to follow the will of another, when this can be done without violation of duty.

XXIV. LOVE OF THE CROSS.

1. Receive with readiness every suffering that God sends you, either directly or through others.

2. Do not give yourself up to an untimely fear of future sufferings and troubles, rather desire them as the greatest gifts God can grant you.

3. Do not anxiously seek relief from every little bodily suffering, and when through obedience you reveal these things to your superior, do so without complaining.

4. Do not wish to be compassionated by others, but desire to have God alone as witness of your sufferings.

5. For love of your Redeemer, scoffed at, loaded with insults and crucified, receive joyfully every humiliation and offense.

6. Show special charity to those who have injured or grieved you and pray for them.

7. Consider yourself most fortunate when by sickness, pain, persecution and the like you are transformed into the likeness of Jesus crucified.

8. Bear with fortitude and constancy all interior sufferings and afflictions, trusting firmly that He Who has laid this heavy trial upon you, will thereby purify you and lead you to a higher degree of glory if you remain faithful to Him.

XXV. OBEDIENCE.

1. Give yourself up without reserve, interiorly and exteriorly to the guidance of obedience; desire nothing, fear nothing, wish for nothing, refuse nothing, but be prepared for everything that is desired of you.

2. By daily renewing your vows offer yourself entirely to God, that He may dispose of you, through your superiors, according to His will.

3. See not man but God Himself in your superiors.

4. Obey in all things even the smallest, without murmur, without objection, with fervor, fidelity and cheerfulness.

5. Place such confidence in the power of obedience, that you would trust to being able to overcome all obstacles, in order to fulfill the will of your superior.

6. Not only fulfill outwardly the commands of superiors, but subject your will to theirs, thereby putting to death your own will and wishes.

7. Do not allow your understanding to judge of the regulations either of your rule or of superiors, but maintain a firm conviction that God enlightens with a particular light the founders of religious orders and also superiors.

XXVI. DENIAL OF ONE'S OWN JUDGMENT.

1. Never presume to judge your superiors, their manner of acting and their regulations, subdue such thoughts as soon as they arise, for they ruin the religious spirit.

2. To immediately subdue such judgments do not go through with a long process of reasoning, but cry to God for help and repeat, "My Jesus, mercy!" until the temptation is past and the enemy has been driven from your heart.

3. If you cannot in this way free yourself from these judgments, reveal to your superior with simplicity and humility this difficulty in regard to obedience.

4. Always think the best of your sisters, and when you see a fault committed, as a tender mother, cover it with the mantle of charity.

5. If you are tempted to uncharitable judgments, think of your own misery and your many and great sins.

6. If you hear of great crimes committed in the world, do not judge concerning them, but humble yourself and think that you would commit yet greater if the grace of God did not keep you therefrom.

7. Do you wish to assure for yourself a favorable sentence on the day of judgment? Then judge no one. "Judge not, that you be not judged," spoke eternal Wisdom.

XXVII. MEEKNESS.

1. Give in willingly to everyone; never be drawn into a dispute.

2. When you are aroused or moved to anger, place yourself in the presence of God and beg Him for the grace to conquer your passions.

3. Hold invariably to the resolution never by look, word or action to show indignation.

4. If others reproach you, acknowledge your fault humbly with friendly face and gentle voice.

5. Never excuse yourself, not even with a single word, unless the honor of God or the welfare of your neighbor demands it.

6. Forgive immediately and entirely all injuries done you, remembering your crucified Savior Who, when dying, prayed for His enemies.

7. Repay one who has offended you with an act of charity performed with great friendliness and deep humility.

8. Often make use of the beautiful ejaculation, "Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto Thine."

XXVIII. CONFORMITY WITH THE WILL OF GOD.

1. Consider everything that the holy Rule or your superiors desire of you as the direct will of God, and hasten joyfully, most perfectly to fulfill it in all things.

2. Receive lovingly the little crosses which divine Providence daily lays upon you; do not wish to be free from them and to choose others for yoursef.

3. Every morning offer yourself by a particular act of consecration entirely to the divine will, and renew this offering frequently during the day, especially in trouble and difficulties, in exterior and interior sufferings.

4. Leave your past, full of confidence, to God and receive with a ready heart from His hand the punishment which your sins deserve.

5. Leave your future entirely to God, desire no other graces and consolation, no higher degree of perfection, no, not even a higher degree of glory in heaven, than He has destined for you.

6. Receive with love from His hand the cross of exterior and interior suffering, say with your divine Redeemer in the Garden of Olives: Lord, not my will but Thine, be done.

7. Resign yourself to the divine will in regard to the time, place and manner of your death and banish all distrust and all childish fear.

8. Leave to the omniscient and beneficent providence of God the disposition of all who are near and dear to you, and also the community of which you are a member,

XXIX. THE INTERIOR LIFE.

1. Do not allow anything which does not relate to God or your duties, to occupy your attention; keep your heart pure and free, allowing entrance to no creature.

2. Banish self-love and self-will from your heart, and all unrest and dissipation.

3. Keep a careful guard over your senses, especially your eyes.

4. Walk always in the presence of God and think that He is regarding all your thoughts, words and deeds as if He were even now sitting in judgment on them.—St. Alph. Rodriguez.

5. Receive in spirit your loving Jesus into your heart, and think of your Lord within you as He appears in heaven to the angels and saints.

6. Walk in the fear of the Lord, and shut yourself up within the cell of your heart, surrounded by your sins and weaknesses as by walls, and never seek to go out.—Ibid.

7. When you are tempted hasten to the feet of Jesus and cry out, "Lord, look upon me, ah, Thou knowest that without Thee I am able to do nothing! Lord, make haste to help me!"—Ibid.

8. In silence and prayer perform your daily duties, faithfully and with industry.

XXX. ZEAL FOR SOULS.

1. Endeavor by edifying deportment, by the zealous practice of virtue, and unalterable friendliness, humility and charity to draw your sisters to God.

2. Let no recreation go by without having spoken, with modesty, of some religious subject, and always try to continue such conversations.

3. Pray fervently for the whole world, that all men may know and love God, and often cry out from your innermost heart, "Sacred Heart of Jesus, give me souls! O, that all might know and love Thee!"

4. When you are alone in your cell sometimes bend your knee toward the four quarters of the earth, thereby to adore God for all men, to love, praise and thank Him, to intercede with the Savior of souls and to make reparation for the sins of the whole world.

5. Make this same intention in all your actions, in your prayers, mortifications and sufferings, at Mass and Holy Communion.

6. Impose upon yourself some particular sacrifice or practice of penance for the good of this or that soul.

7. Pray and offer something to God that He may be pleased to lead one or more souls now living upon earth to a high degree of sanctity, and may use them as instruments for the exaltation of His holy Church, for the conversion of the heathen, unbelievers and sinners and for the advantage of many souls.

XXXI. CONFIDENCE IN GOD.

1. Fear no fault so much as discouragement, in the conviction that nothing so hinders you from advancing in the way of perfection as this fault in which is included distrust of God.

2. When you have fallen into any fault, take care not to add thereto a common but greater one—despondency and distrust of God; but after having made an act of contrition, observe the same childlike confidence in your intercourse with God as before. In so doing, far from acting rashly, you honor God in His mercy.

3. Make use of your faults and weaknesses to humble and distrust yourself ever more and more, but just so much the more place your confidence in God, remembering the words of St. Paul, "When I am weak, then am I strong; I can do all things in Him Who strengthens me."

4. Do not allow yourself to become discouraged by distractions and aridity in prayer. "If you never *will* to be distracted, you will never *be* distracted," says Fenelon.

5. Never cease to renew your good resolutions and to strive to keep them, no matter how often you fail.

6. Avoid all unnecessary reflection upon yourself, strive only to advance ever more in the love of God and to please Him, and, with perfect confidence, leave to Him the care of your temporal and spiritual needs.

7. Have confidence that with the assistance of grace you may aim at great things, even to be a saint, God is wont to communicate His gifts according to the measure of our confidence.

DATE DUE

SEP 1 1995	
AUG 25 1995	
MAY 25 2015	
GAYLORD	PRINTED IN U.S.A.

GTU Library
2400 Ridge Road
Berkeley, CA 94709
For renewals call (510) 649-2500
All items are subject to recall.

GTU Library
3 2400 00301 4101